

St. Anselm:



BASIC WRITINGS

TRANSLATED BY
S. N. DEANE
INTRODUCTION BY
CHARLES
HARTSHORNE

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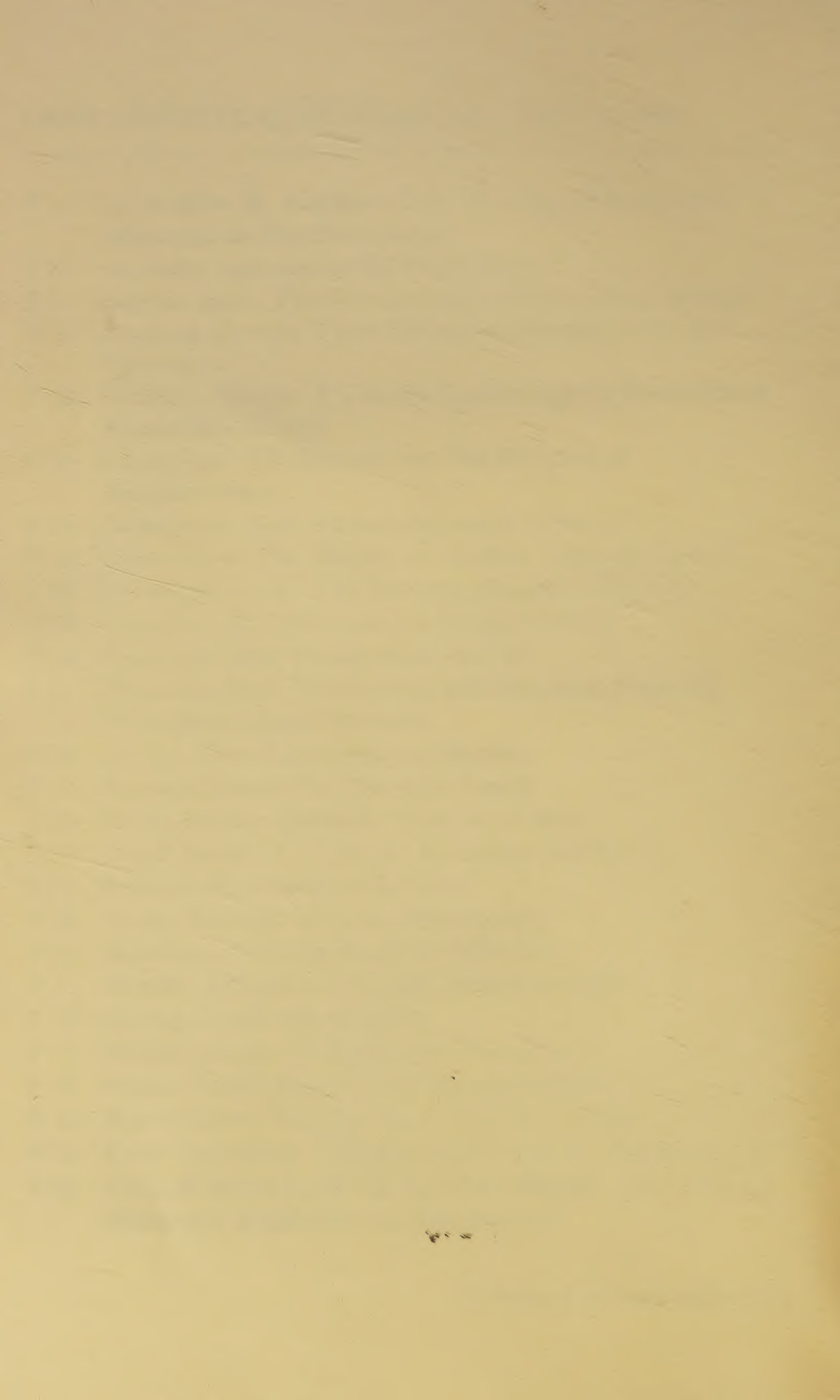
PROSLOGIUM
MONOLOGIUM
CUR DEUS HOMO
&
THE FOOL *By*
GAUNILON

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Saint Anselm

BASIC WRITINGS

PROLOGUE & MONOLOGUE

PROLOGUE TO THE MONOLOGUE & THE TRIANGLE

THE MONOLOGUE

Saint Anselm

Translated by

R. C. Marsh

Edited by

John J. O'Donoghue

Introduction

Translated by R. C. Marsh, with an introduction by John J. O'Donoghue

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1841

Saint Anselm

BASIC WRITINGS

PROSLOGIUM • MONOLOGIUM •

GAUNILON'S: ON BEHALF OF THE FOOL •

CUR DEUS HOMO

translated by

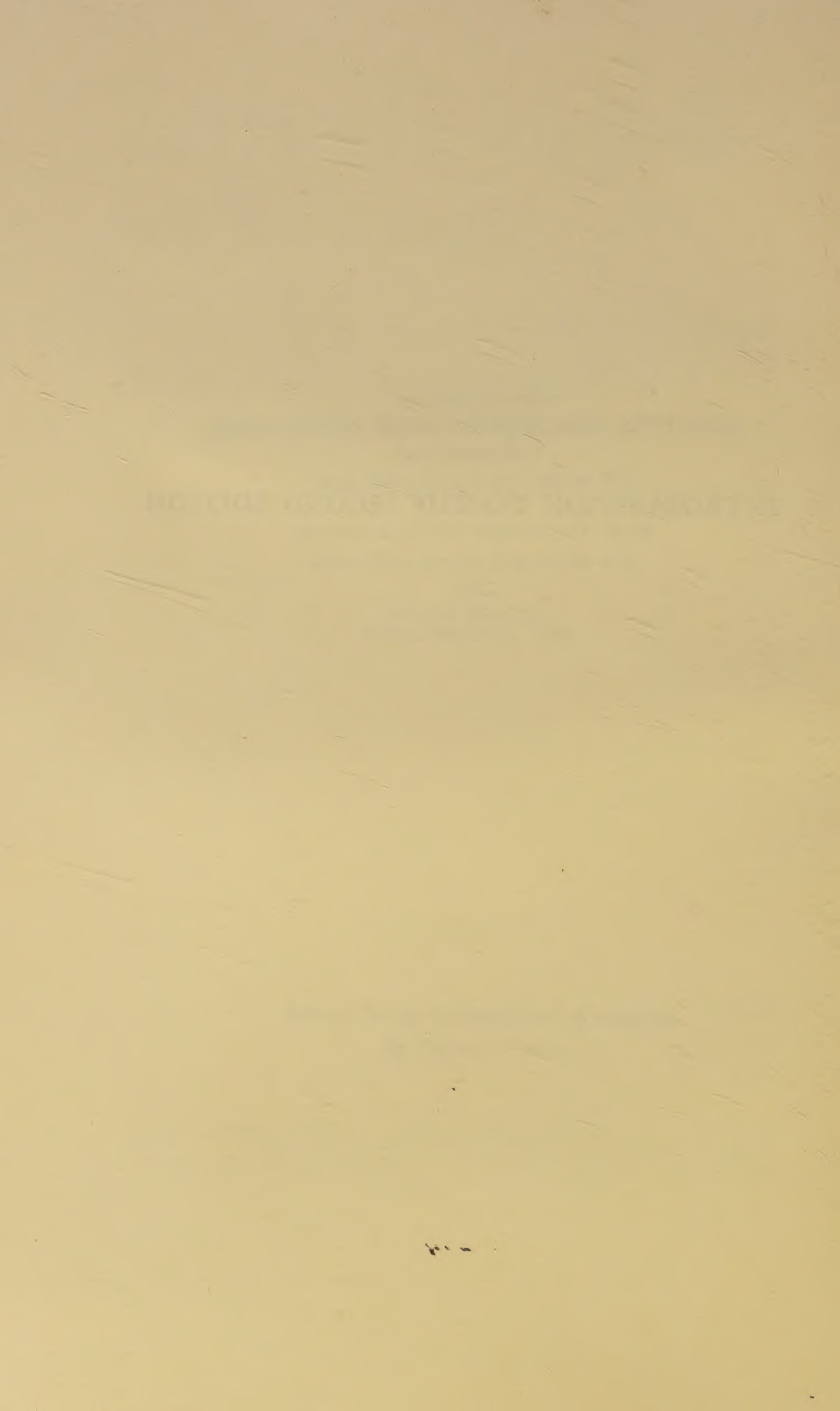
S. N. Deane

with an introduction by

Charles Hartshorne

Second Edition

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INTRODUCTION TO SECOND EDITION

Anselm, "one of the profoundest and most exalted of spirits" (Koyré), is a philosopher whom it has long been fashionable to discuss, but quite unfashionable to study. There is no more famous philosophical argument than his so-called "ontological" proof for God's existence. It was stated in a few pages, and elaborated—in response to criticism—in a few more. Yet even these few pages have been far too many for the Argument's detractors to read. In Anselm's own life-time, a tradition—we may well call it "the Gaunilo tradition," since he is its founder—began to take shape that one scarcely reads Anselm: rather one refutes him essentially unread, so decisively that reading him would be needless toil. Only upon the assumption that the great majority of commentators upon the Argument which Anselm invented have viewed the original exposition almost entirely at secondhand can it be explained that what Anselm evidently thought were his most important points are left without even a mention, not only in the most widely-cited refutations, but also in some of the better known defenses.¹

Of course, certain specialists have achieved intimate knowledge of Anselm's thought (e.g., K. Barth, Koyré, Hasse, Rigg), but their explications, and their protests against the common misunderstandings, have gone largely unheeded. The main mass of reference works, including the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the *Catholic*

1. *Anselm's Discovery: A Re-Examination of the Ontological Proof of God's Existence* (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1964).

Encyclopaedia, and most dictionaries, histories, textbooks, dealing particularly with philosophy, and written in various languages, give scant information concerning the central Anselmian idea. Even to say this is flattery. For they present their wretched little caricatures as serious accounts of the subject. (Let the reader say what he pleases about this charge—after he has genuinely investigated the matter for himself.) If Anselm is to be refuted, it should be for what he said, taken in something like the context which he provided, and not for something someone else said he said, or a fragment of what he said, torn wholly out of context.

No one should attempt to criticize or defend Anselm's proposal who fails to read, and read carefully, at least Chapters III-IV of the *Proslogium*, and Chapters I, V, and IX of the *Apologium* (reply to Gaunilo). Compared to these, the famous-notorious Chapter II of the *Proslogium* (or at least, its endlessly-quoted last two paragraphs) is, as Barth says in his book on Anselm's argument, altogether secondary. These paragraphs represent but a preliminary try, and an unsuccessful one—elliptical and misleading at best—to state the essential point, which is first explicitly formulated in *Proslogium* III, and reiterated many times in the *Apologetic* I, V, and IX.

Among the many errors which have accumulated about Anselm is the notion that the evaluation of his Argument is a simple task. He himself shared to some extent in this error. It is the very nature of metaphysical questions that they all interlock in such fashion that any one of them is *the* metaphysical question from a certain angle. A defender of the Proof, if he is to un-

derstand himself, must have a metaphysics, and so must its attackers. Or at least, they must have a theory about metaphysics, and their refutation of the Proof will be insecure if the theory is so. And vice versa!

The Proof claims to show that one and only one property, divinity, is related by necessity to the existence of a unique individual having the property, so that to conceive the property is to conceive the necessary existence of that individual. In this case "existence" is not a mere question of fact but of logical necessity. Thus "God" is held to be an exception to the ordinary rule that affirmations of existence are contingent. To insist upon the universal validity of the rule is merely to say dogmatically that what the argument claims to show cannot be correct. Moreover that the idea of God must be an exception to certain otherwise valid generalizations is obvious from any usual definition of this idea and has been asserted by many hundreds of philosophers and theologians for nearly two thousand years. From Philo, Plotinus, Dionysius, Erigena, and Anselm to Tillich it has been commonplace that God is not to be supposed simply another being. Indeed, the very term "being" has been declared inadequate, along with all other usual conceptions, including existence, attribute, individual, part-whole, and other basic categories. If then we reject the Proof simply because it treats the object of worship as an exception to ordinary principles, we shall be declaring not only that the ontological argument for theism is invalid but that theism itself is logically impossible!

My own beliefs are: the Proof, properly stated, violates no rule which theism would not have to violate

with or without the Proof; in addition, the rule violated when the Proof is well stated rests on prejudice or illicit extrapolation, not on logical necessity. However, when poorly stated, as it generally has been, the Proof violates a rule which theism as such need not abrogate, and for which also there is clear logical necessity. Finally, the correct or valid statement of the Proof includes a somewhat nontraditional definition of its conclusion, of theism itself, and since this definition contradicts the more usual definition, it follows that the latter, the conventional (neoplatonic) form of theism (which Anselm himself sought to establish), is actually *disproved* by the Argument.² This is indeed the greatness of Anselm's discovery, greater than he knew: it has the power to reveal contradictions which otherwise might not be noticed, not only in atheism, but also in erroneous conceptions of the object of worship. Thus the proof throws light not simply upon the existence, but also upon the nature, of God. Anselm was in some degree aware of this (see *Proslogium* VI and following chapters). But prejudices derived chiefly from Greek and Roman sources blinded him to some of its implications.

That deity must be an exception to many otherwise correct rules seems plain from the unique status: "by whom all things, visible and invisible, are made." For surely He is not, in the same sense, "made," whether by Himself or by anything else. Anselm's proposal can therefore be put thus: the contrasts, creature-creator and contingently-necessarily existent, should be seen

2. See, besides the work already mentioned: *The Logic of Perfection and Other Essays in Neoclassical Metaphysics* (LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court, 1962) Ch. 2.

as one and the same contrast, somewhat differently expressed. All things except God are contingent—of course, says the theist, since they exist only thanks to the fact that it pleased God (and it might not have) to make their existence possible! But surely God does not exist because it pleased Him (and might not have) to make His own existence possible! In this and many other ways it may be shown that God cannot be contingent in a sense parallel to the contingency of ordinary existents.

To talk about "perfect islands" as analogous to deity is mere trifling, unless insular "perfection" (which, *nota bene*, is not Anselm's word) is taken to include the status, "creator of all things else." But then "insular" loses its meaning! When one reads some cheap and easy refutations of the Proof one gets the impression of the following strange course of thought: if God can exist necessarily, surely many other things can too; or, what God can do, others can do also; or, surely His unique excellence cannot go so far that His very mode of existing, His very relation to the category of existence, is unique also. Ah, but can it not? This may turn out to be the same as the question whether or not theism (and not simply an argument for theism) is logically possible. And if the logical possibility of theism is what the critic impugns, by all means let him say so! Debate is mere confusion unless we know what a man is contending for or against.

There are at least three reasons why the Anselmian problem is not simple. One is the subtlety of the modal concepts of necessary truth and necessary reality, as to which there are various disagreements among logicians and philosophers generally. To be

sure, Anselm does not say "necessary"; he simply says, "cannot be conceived not to exist." However, there is here an unnoticed ambiguity, (and this is our second complication). "God cannot be conceived not to exist" might mean only that the status or property by which He has been defined—his "perfection" or unsurpassability by any conceivable being—cannot be conceived except as embodied *somehow*, in some appropriate concrete reality, although just *how*, or in what concrete reality, is subject to alternatives, i.e., is contingent. (Thus God, or unsurpassable reality, is conceivable as creator, and knowing Himself as creator, of our actual world; but also He might conceivably have existed as creator, and knowing Himself as creator, of some other world instead of this one.) But again, the expression might mean that even the concrete embodiment (in whatever sense, if any, one may in that case speak of such a thing) in or by which divinity exists is subject to no conceivable alternatives, so that the divine reality is in every aspect without contingency. Still a third complication is a similar ambiguity in the definition of deity as such that "none greater is conceivable." This might mean, such that no *other* being could conceivably be greater, although the being itself, in another "state," could be so; or again it might mean, such that nothing at all could be greater, even the same being in another state. Using the word "unsurpassable" to mean that no greater is conceivable, we could define God either as *unsurpassable by another*, or else as unsurpassable absolutely, that is, whether by another or by himself.

It will be noted that the two ambiguities just referred to are similar, since in both cases we have a choice between necessary (or unsurpassable) absolutely

or in all possible senses, and not in all possible senses. An unqualified or absolute sense is always the easiest to formulate, and the human mind is strongly tempted by simplicity, often by violent oversimplification. It is clear that Anselm resolved both of the ambiguities above mentioned (without consciously noting them) in favor of the simpler rendering. For nine centuries both defenders and critics have (I am tempted to say, blindly) followed him in this. Until the more complex, and one may well say subtler, rendering has been carefully explored, how can we be sure that the stubbornness of the controversy is not due precisely to this unwitting agreement as to how two implicit ambiguities are to be resolved? It may well be equally true that all existence is contingent (at least in some aspect), and that *one* existence is necessary (in some aspect). Again, it may be equally true that all beings are somehow surpassable, and that one being is surpassable only by itself. Since analysis shows that the unsurpassable aspect implies necessary existence, all parties may have been defending truth, but truth which the terms of the controversy have until now condemned to remain ill-defined.

Among the improper statements of the Proof is the extremely common form (found first in Anselm himself, *Proslogium* II): the perfect must have all desirable or good properties, real or objective existence is such a property, therefore the perfect has such existence, or exists. This is then refuted by the observation that existence is not a property, desirable or otherwise. Every specifiable property distinguishing islands, for example, from other kinds of things is involved in the notion of nonexistent islands as well as in that of existent ones. So, in general, existence is not a prop-

erty in the sense which the argument seems to require.

The refutation has force, but only against a small part of Anselm's exposition. Taking his entire discussion (or Descartes's entire discussion) into account, we find that Anselm (or Descartes) has no need of a general principle according to which existence is a property. For there is direct reason for taking *divine* or *necessary* existence as a property (which inheres in the property of divinity as defined), and to show this no such major premise as the one above impugned about existence in general is needed. Indeed, the sense in which the divine form of existence is a property is shown to be doubly unique, neither existence nor property having here a simply usual meaning. The property Anselm needs is not mere existence but *necessary-existence*, the unique existence of the creator of all things. Is it so odd to suppose that this sense of "exist" must somehow be unique? True, there must also be a universal meaning of "exist" which applies even here; but is it this universal meaning of which it can be proved that it is "never a predicate?" Existing contingently (or as creatures exist), this indeed is clearly never (except in an innocuous sense) a predicate; but of existence in the all-comprehending meaning which includes the creator, we can, without begging the question, only say that, at least apart from the one supreme form, it is no predicate. The supreme form, however, must be judged directly, and without prejudice; for otherwise we are merely ruling out theism a priori.

One way to put Anselm's contention is this:

- A. "Divinity exists" is, though not without difficulty, or without severe qualifications, conceivable by the human mind;

- B. "Divinity does not exist" is strictly inconceivable (in a more than verbal sense) by any mind, being either self-contradictory or meaningless.

Thus the usual symmetry between the conceivability of existence and that of nonexistence is here upset in favor of existence. Taking this as the Anselmian position, refutation must consist in showing *either* that divine existence and divine nonexistence are alike conceivable, or that divine existence is inconceivable. These two ways of upsetting the asserted asymmetry, though obviously incompatible, are very commonly confused, and this is one of several defects which disfigure this prolonged controversy. The doctrine of symmetrical conceivability may be called *empiricism* with respect to the theistic question; that of the inconceivability of existence is suitably termed *positivism*. From Carneades to Carnap this positivistic position has been taken, and Gaunilo in part argues from it. Anselm is willing to debate the point (see *Apologetic*, Ch. VIII); however, his defense of the conceivability of divinity is rather an after-thought, and the main intent of his discussion is to refute, not positivism, but empiricism.

The first question a critic should consider, therefore, is, Has the "nonexistence of divinity" a conceivable consistent meaning? Kant and Hume assure us that it has. Kant's argument here is: a contradiction arises only if we posit a subject but deny some part of its essential nature; from denying both subject and nature, no contradiction can arise. This simply begs the question, which is, *can* the subject be denied? After all,

"denying the subject" either means, "denying the logical possibility of the concept," or it does not. If it does mean this, then we have the positivistic position, not the empirical one. If it does not, then at least the concept is accepted, and the issue, "does the concept permit the denial of its object," is still to be adjudicated. Kant was here misled by *Proslogium* II (as repeated in Descartes, Leibniz, Baumgarten, *et al.*) in which the Proof seems to be, A nonexistent thing cannot be perfect, to which the easy rejoinder is, "A nonexistent entity possesses no actual properties at all, we have only a description of what properties such an entity *would* have should it exist." But this way of putting the case meets Anselm only at his weakest. His real argument is that the merely contingent exemplification of the unique predicate, divinity, would be contradictory, for contingent existence is an inferior mode of existing, suitable only to a creature not the creator, and hence "that to which a superior cannot be conceived" can exist only noncontingently. And "existing noncontingently" means existing without conceivable alternative of not existing. Very well, but if the nonexistence of divinity *were* conceivable, it must remain conceivable "even if it (divinity) existed." (Anselm reiterates this phrase). Whether something is conceivable cannot depend upon what happens to exist, but only upon meanings and their mutual compatibility. Either, then, "divinity" means the same as, or is equivalent to, "existing divinity," or if not, the only existence of which divinity is even capable must be contingent existence. But since this implies, "existing in an imperfect manner (or as a creature)," a manner incompatible with the supreme excellence connoted by "divine," it is con-

tradictory. If divinity does mean, or is equivalent to, existing divinity, then it is the "nonexistence of divinity" which is contradictory. Thus, either way, we have contradiction, unless we admit that divinity and existing divinity are equivalent and that consequently the nonexistence of divinity is inconceivable.

Take now Kant's assertion: we can deny the subject and with it all its predicates. How does he show that such a verbal denial expresses a genuine conception of the divine nonexistence? He cannot or ought not to mean that we can stop thinking of the divine essence or existence. To stop thinking of elephants is not the same as thinking that there are none. What then is the difference between not thinking and thinking not? I fail to find any help in Hume, Kant, Russell, Carnap, or Wittgenstein, at this point. To think the nonexistence of elephants is simple: one has but to think of a universe everywhere lacking in the elephantine character. But a universe everywhere lacking in divine character is no such straightforward notion. In what sense can a universe conceivably have divine character, and what could show that it lacked this character? Kant's own view is that ordinary nonexistence means, for us, noninclusion among the objects of our possible experience. But he also holds that God, existent or not, would be no such object! So then what does he mean by the possible nonexistence of God? He is not thinking of a priori evidence for this nonexistence, for he denies the possibility of such evidence. Thus "divine nonexistence" apparently relates itself to no conceivable evidence, empirical or a priori!

Perhaps the implication is that some nonhuman mind could either experience or prove that nothing is

divine? Certainly a divine mind could not know its own nonexistence, though it seems it could know its existence. Furthermore, since God, as part of His definition, is thought of as unsurpassably great in creative power, so that all else is His conceivable effect, and since the Cause must in principle be knowable from the effect, the existence of God, supposing it conceivable at all, cannot be unknowable absolutely, even to nondivine mind. On the other hand, it follows from the same considerations that His nonexistence must be unknowable absolutely. For, one who knows cannot know nonentity only, he must know something positive; and if this something is not God, it is either something which He could be conceived to have created, or something which He could not be conceived to have created. Only in the latter case would one be knowing the nonexistence of God; but since divine creative power is conceived as unsurpassably great, nothing other than this power can be supposed incapable of being its creature.

Putting together the considerations just advanced: divine nonexistence is unknowable absolutely, whether by divine or nondivine cognition. By contrast, divine existence is conceivably knowable, both by God Himself and also by any nondivine cognition able to connect effects with their universal Cause (not to mention able to understand the Ontological Proof). I conclude that the asymmetry to which Anselm points is quite real, and that on this main issue he is essentially correct, and his critics essentially mistaken. It is true, like it or not, that divinity, *differing in this from all ordinary properties, cannot be conceived (relative to possible knowledge) unless as existent.*

Yet the critics of the proof have seen something which likewise is correct: it cannot be possible, from an abstract formula such as the definition of divinity, to deduce the fullness of the divine reality, which is supposed somehow to sum up all the value of the universe of creatures and incomparably more besides. *From abstractions alone nothing but abstract conclusions can follow.* Is the necessary being, which Anselm proves divinity to be, a mere abstraction? Here it is Anselm who does not help us. The question is not merely, "How can we know the more than abstract from the merely abstract"? The difficulty is objective and ultimate: how can the necessary *be* more than abstract?

Let us consider a good logical model of necessity—which cannot be Kant's "bodies are extended," for this, as he rightly says, is conditional necessity only: perhaps there are no bodies, extended or otherwise. The more helpful model is the sentential axiom: " p or not- p ." Why is this an a priori principle? Because any universe must correspond either to " p " or to "not- p ." (Assuming that the requirements of unambiguity can be met, the law of excluded middle becomes self-evident.) " P or not- p " commits us to no particular state of affairs rather than any other, but is neutral or noncommittal as between alternative possibilities. According to this model, if "divinity exists" is necessary then it is equally compatible with any ordinary or contingent proposition p and with its negation. Just so "2 and 2 is 4" agrees equally well with (for instance) "it is raining" and "it is not raining," and so for *any contingent* value of p .

Let us suppose that p is true. Then God may be conceived to exist knowing that p . Or suppose that p is

false. Then God may equally well be conceived to exist, but knowing that non- p . And this formula applies for any value of p , except only those which are equivalent to the proposition, "divinity exists." Since the contingency of *this* proposition is precisely what is in question, it cannot be used to furnish an exception to the universal compatibility of the existence of deity with any contingent p or not- p . If, instead of "deity exists," we take "men exist," we find many values of p (by no means simply equivalent to the existence of men) with which, or with its negation, the existence of men will be incompatible. Men can exist, knowing the state of affairs obtaining, only thanks to certain favorable circumstances (e.g., the presence of oxygen, rather than various poisonous gases) without which they will not exist or know anything at all. To exist only thanks to favorable circumstances is, Anselm is saying, just what we mean by contingent existence. God, however, cannot exist "thanks to" anything—unless to its being true that He exists, the trivially tautologous character of which shows the inapplicability here of the ordinary notion of conditioned or contingent existence. The notion of anything preventing deity from existing is nonsense or contradiction. Spinoza rightly stresses this consideration. Has he ever been refuted just at this point? Divinity, or unsurpassability, includes unsurpassable or unlimited tolerance to alternative situations and conditions; hence the strict unknowability, and indeed meaninglessness, of the non-existence of divinity.

However, though deity cannot conceivably not exist, there must yet be qualities which are in the divine reality but might not have been there, and also qual-

ities which might have been there but are not. For example, the divine reality includes the property of creating and knowing what p asserts (whatever true contingent proposition p may be); yet the divine reality might, though it does not, include the property of creating and knowing a state of affairs corresponding to not- p . Evidently the identical God, with wholly identical qualities, could not know that elephants exist and that elephants do not exist, for "X, who is infallible, knows that elephants exist" is incompatible with the truth of "elephants do not exist." Thus the fullness of the divine reality, if there be anything in the least analogous to knowledge in it, cannot be neutral to the distinction between p and not- p , and hence cannot be necessary. The concrete reality, or *how* divinity is concretized, is thus not to be supposed neutral to contingent alternatives, but rather, infinitely sensitive to them. It must correspond with some propositions, to p and with others, to not- p ; but in no case to a mere " p or not- p ." It thus lacks the essential or definitive trait of the necessary, which must be on both sides of all the contingent contradictories, and must, therefore, lack the concreteness which distinguishes them from each other. The necessary is abstract or impoverished to the uttermost, and only therefore does it conflict with nothing, being the mere point of agreement of all possible truths or realities.

Here is Anselm's central failure, his only radical one, that he never relates the necessary, and therefore abstract, to anything which is more than abstract in God. And he cannot do so, for neoplatonic theology is committed to the worship of the necessary or eternally immutable as opposed to the contingent or noneternal.

Note, for instance, as one of the innumerable signs of this, the way Anselm is forced (*Proslogium* VI-VIII) to explain away divine "compassion" as not really that at all, though the effects upon us are as if God experienced compassion for us. In just the same way the Saint could be forced, and many others in his tradition were forced, to explain away divine knowledge, and everything else worth talking about, in the object of worship. The excuse is always the same: we must expect to fail to understand deity, but on no account may we admit any contingency, passivity, relativity, or becoming in Him. But, as Berdyaev has suggested, if we understand the need for these denials so well as all that, our pretended modesty does not go very deep, and, for all we know, the trouble at this point is not with the mysteriousness of God, but with the mysterious pretentiousness and stubbornness of the human mind which, having once dared to forbid deity to enjoy the advantages of concreteness (contingency), will not be induced even by contradictions to withdraw this negative legislation!

The century-long persistence in this behavior is only the more remarkable in that a "face-saving" retreat from it is quite open. We need not, indeed we should not, simply retract the negative theology; we need only admit that it applies to God not *simpliciter*, but in one aspect only, the eternal or necessary aspect. To be sure, the negative theology denied any real plurality of aspects; but since this denial is the source of antinomies, why not abandon it? Worshipping God is one thing; worshipping the negative theology is another. The being who is exalted beyond all rivalry, and hence worthy of worship by all, must indeed be unsurpas-

sable—unless it surpasses itself. For this mode of surpassability sets no limit to worship. If even God in a sense, “looks up” to God, then a *fortiori* we ought to!

The weakness inherent in Anselm’s negative theology does not refute his contention that the divine nonexistence is inconceivable. What it shows is rather that God’s reality must be more than His necessary existence, and must include a wealth of positive and contingent qualities or aspects. An analogy: each moment my personal existence is concretized anew, but just how, in just what experiences, is always an additional fact, not deducible from the bare truth that I continue existing. Moreover, my individuality might not have been, and I might soon not be, concretized in any way at all. The divine individuality, by contrast, has this unique superiority: it must always be and have been concretized somehow. Only the *how*, not the *that*, is here contingent.

Let us symbolize as clearly as possible what we have been saying. Let the following symbols have the meanings specified:

“Es” for “essence” (definition, concept, universal)

“Ex” for “existence” (there is an actual instance, some instance or other, of the essence)

“Ac” for “actuality” (the concrete instance itself)

“=” for “equal or equivalent to” (implies and is implied by)

“<” for “is less than” (hence does not imply, and is not equivalent to).

Consider then the following:

$$Es \leq Ex < Ac$$

Interpretation: Essence is (in the divine form) or is

not (in nondivine forms) equivalent to existing (or somehow actualized) essence; however, in no case is the bare truth that an essence exists, or is somehow actualized, equivalent to the whole truth about the particular instance by which, or how, the essence is actualized.

Anselm pointed to the necessary collapse of inequality between essence and existence in the divine case; his opponents, to the impossibility of a collapse of inequality between essence and actuality. Both were right. But both erred in overlooking the distinction between existence and actuality. Controversies in philosophy often have this character. The parties cannot agree because they agree only too well on the wrong assumption, in this case, the identity of existence and concrete actuality, the *that* and the *how* of an essence's actualization.

It is to be noted that the necessary existence of deity, though it does not entail a particular concrete actuality, does amount to the existence of a unique individual. For only one being can be divine. There is no class of possible divine individuals. Alternative or contingent divine qualities can only be qualities which God, but no one else, may contingently have. The reason universal essence (or class) and individuality here coincide is that this is the individual with strictly universal functions, knowing all, influencing all, being influenced by all. Whereas I for instance, can never influence, or be known to, my remote ancestors, nor yet ever be influenced by or know any remote descendents I may have, God enjoys a "field" of relatedness, whether as influencing or as influenced, which is absolutely infinite and unselective among possible or actual indiv-

iduals. Simply "all things" whatever, the actual things actually, the possible things potentially, influence and are influenced by Him. It thus makes no difference to God's individuality what possibilities are realized. Only the actual states of the same God differ according to what actual things there are for Him to relate Himself to.

Anselm had some elements of a systematic and profound theory of contingency and necessity, in relation to the divine unsurpassability. The theory was incomplete, and to complete it without logical absurdity forces one (unless I am mistaken indeed) well beyond his type of philosophy and theology. But it is his own discovery which, carefully reflected upon, can carry us to this beyond.³

CHARLES HARTSHORNE

EMORY UNIVERSITY

FEBRUARY, 1962

3. In the first sentence on page 61 of our present translation of the Proslogium there is a lack of clarity which my colleague, Dr. Joseph Conant, has suggested may be remedied as follows: "But as it is absurd to suppose that, because the created being can in no way exceed the immeasureableness of what creates and sustains it, the creating and sustaining being similarly can in no way exceed the universe of things it has created; it is clear that . . . etc."

INTRODUCTION.

THE present volume of St. Anselm's most important philosophical and theological writings contains: (1) The *Proslogium* (2) the *Monologium*, (3) the *Cur Deus Homo*, and (4) by way of historical complement, an Appendix to the *Monologium* entitled *In Behalf of the Fool* by Gaunilon, a monk of Marmoutiers. The *Proslogium* (which, though subsequent in point of time to the *Monologium*, is here placed first, as containing the famous ontological argument), the *Monologium* and the Appendix thereto were translated by Mr. Sidney Norton Deane, of New Haven, Conn.; the *Cur Deus Homo* was rendered by James Gardiner Vose, formerly of Milton, Conn., and later of Providence, R. I., and published in 1854 and 1855 in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, then issued at Andover, Mass., by Warren F. Draper. The thanks of the reading public are due to all these gentlemen for their gratuitous labors in behalf of philosophy.

Welch's recent book *Anselm and His Work*, by its accessibility, renders any extended biographical notice of Anselm unnecessary. We append, therefore, merely a few brief paragraphs from Weber's admirable *History of Philosophy* on Anselm's position in the world of thought, and we afterwards add (this, at the suggestion of Prof. George M. Duncan, of Yale University) a series of quotations regarding Anselm's most characteristic contribution to philosophy—the *ontological argument*—from Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibnitz, Kant, Hegel, Dörner, Lotze, and Professor Flint. A bibliography also has been compiled. Thus the work will give full material and indications for the original study of one of the greatest exponents of Christian doctrine.

ANSELM'S PHILOSOPHY.

(AFTER WEBER.¹)

"The first really speculative thinker after Scotus is St. Anselmus, the disciple of Lanfranc. He was born at Aosta (1033),

¹From Weber's *History of Philosophy*. Trans. by F. Thilly. New York Scribner's. Price, \$2.50.

entered the monastery of Bec in Normandy (1060), succeeded Lanfranc as Abbot (1078), and as Archbishop of Canterbury (1093). He died in 1109. He left a great number of writings, the most important of which are: the *Dialogus de grammatico*, the *Monologium de divinitatis essentia sive Exemplum de ratione fidei*, the *Proslogium sive Fides quærens intellectum*, the *De veritate*, the *De fide trinitatis*, and the *Cur Deus Homo?*

"The second Augustine, as St. Anselmus had been called, starts out from the same principle as the first; he holds that faith precedes all reflection and all discussion concerning religious things. The unbelievers, he says, strive to understand because they do not believe; we, on the contrary, strive to understand because we believe. *They and we have the same object in view*; but inasmuch as they do not believe, they cannot arrive at their goal, which is to understand the dogma. The unbeliever will never understand. In religion faith plays the part played by experience in the understanding of the things of this world. The blind man cannot see the light, and therefore does not understand it; the deaf-mute, who has never perceived sound, cannot have a clear idea of sound. Similarly, not to believe means not to perceive, and not to perceive means not to understand. Hence, we do not reflect in order that we may believe; on the contrary, we believe in order that we may arrive at knowledge. A Christian ought never to doubt the beliefs and teachings of the Holy Catholic Church. All he can do is to strive, as humbly as possible, to understand her teachings by believing them, to love them, and resolutely to observe them in his daily life. Should he succeed in understanding the Christian doctrine, let him render thanks to God, the source of all intelligence! In case he fails, that is no reason why he should obstinately attack the dogma, but a reason why he should bow his head in worship. Faith ought not merely to be the starting-point,—the Christian's aim is not to *depart* from faith but to remain in it,—but also the fixed rule and goal of thought, the beginning, the middle, and the end of all philosophy.

"The above almost literal quotations might give one the impression that St. Anselmus belongs exclusively to the history of theology. Such is not the case, however. This fervent Catholic is more independent, more of an investigator and philosopher than he himself imagines. He is a typical scholastic doctor and a fine exponent of the alliance between reason and faith which forms the characteristic trait of mediæval philosophy. He assumes, *a priori*,

that revelation and reason are in perfect accord. These two manifestations of one and the same Supreme Intelligence cannot possibly contradict each other. Hence, his point of view is diametrically opposed to the *credo quia absurdum*. Moreover, he too had been besieged by doubt. Indeed, the extreme ardor which impels him to search everywhere for arguments favorable to the dogma, is a confession on his part that the dogma needs support, that it is debatable, that it lacks self-evidence, the criterion of truth. Even as a monk, it was his chief concern to find a simple and conclusive argument in support of the existence of God and of all the doctrines of the Church concerning the Supreme Being. Mere affirmation did not satisfy him; he demanded proofs. This thought was continually before his mind; it caused him to forget his meals, and pursued him even during the solemn moments of worship. He comes to the conclusion that it is a temptation of Satan, and seeks deliverance from it. But in vain. After a night spent in meditation, he at last discovers what he has been seeking for years: the incontrovertible argument in favor of the Christian dogma, and he regards himself as fortunate in having found, not only the proof of the existence of God, but his peace of soul. His demonstrations are like the premises of modern rationalism.

“Everything that exists, he says, has its cause, and this cause may be one or many. If it is one, then we have what we are looking for: God, the unitary being to whom all other beings owe their origin. If it is manifold, there are three possibilities: (1) The manifold may depend on unity as its cause; or (2) Each thing composing the manifold may be self-caused; or (3) Each thing may owe its existence to all the other things. The first case is identical with the hypothesis that everything proceeds from a single cause; for to depend on several causes, all of which depend on a single cause, means to depend on this single cause. In the second case, we must assume that there is a power, force, or faculty of self-existence common to all the particular causes assumed by the hypothesis; a power in which all participate and are comprised. But that would give us what we had in the first case, an absolute unitary cause. The third supposition, which makes each of the ‘first causes’ depend on all the rest, is absurd; for we cannot hold that a thing has for its cause and condition of existence a thing of which it is itself the cause and condition. Hence we are compelled to believe in a being which is the cause of every existing thing, without being caused by anything itself, and which for

that very reason is infinitely more perfect than anything else: it is the most real (*ens realissimum*), most powerful, and best being. Since it does not depend on any being or on any condition of existence other than itself, it is *a se* and *per se*; it exists, not because something else exists, but it exists because it exists; that is, it exists necessarily, it is necessary being.

"It would be an easy matter to deduce pantheism from the arguments of the *Monologium*. Anselmus, it is true, protests against such an interpretation of his theology. With St. Augustine he assumes that the world is created *ex nihilo*. But though accepting this teaching, he modifies it. Before the creation, he says, things did not exist *by themselves*, independently of God; hence we say they were derived from non-being. But they existed eternally *for God* and in God, as ideas; they existed before their creation, in the sense that the Creator foresaw them and predestined them for existence.

"The existence of God, the unitary and absolute cause of the world, being proved, the question is to determine his nature and attributes. God's perfections are like human perfections; with this difference, however, that they are essential to him, which is not the case with us. Man has received a share of certain perfections, but there is no necessary correlation between him and these perfections; it would have been possible for him not to receive them; he could have existed without them. God, on the contrary, does not get his perfections from without; he has not received them, and we cannot say that he *has* them; he *is* and must be everything that these perfections imply; his attributes are identical with his essence. Justice, an attribute of God, and God are not two separate things. We cannot say of God that he has justice or goodness; we cannot even say that he *is* just; for to be just is to participate in justice after the manner of creatures. God is justice as such, goodness as such, wisdom as such, happiness as such, truth as such, being as such. Moreover, all of God's attributes constitute but a single attribute, by virtue of the unity of his essence (*unum est quidquid essentialiter de summa substantia dicitur*).

"All this is pure Platonism. But, not content with spiritualising theism, Anselmus really discredits it when, like a new Carneades, he enumerates the difficulties which he finds in the conception. God is a simple being and at the same time eternal, that is, diffused over infinite points of time; he is omnipresent, that is,

distributed over all points of space. Shall we say that God is omnipresent and eternal? This proposition contradicts the notion of the simplicity of the divine essence. Shall we say that he is nowhere in space and nowhere in time? But that would be equivalent to denying his existence. Let us therefore reconcile these two extremes and say that God is omnipresent and eternal, without being limited by space or time. The following is an equally serious difficulty: In God there is no change and consequently nothing accidental. Now, there is no substance without accidents. Hence God is not a substance; he transcends all substance. Anselmus is alarmed at these dangerous consequences of his logic, and he therefore prudently adds that, though the term 'substance' may be incorrect, it is, nevertheless, the best we can apply to God—*si quid digne dici potest*—and that to avoid or condemn it might perhaps jeopardise our faith in the reality of the Divine Being.

"The most formidable theological antinomy is the doctrine of the trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence. The Word is the object of eternal thought; it is God in so far as he is thought, conceived, or comprehended by himself. The Holy Spirit is the love of God for the Word, and of the Word for God, the love which God bears himself. But is this explanation satisfactory? And does it not sacrifice the dogma which it professes to explain to the conception of unity? St. Anselmus sees in the Trinity and the notion of God insurmountable difficulties and contradictions, which the human mind cannot reconcile. In his discouragement he is obliged to confess, with Scotus Erigena, St. Augustine, and the Neo-Platonists, that no human word can adequately express the essence of the All-High. Even the words 'wisdom' (*sapientia*) and 'being' (*essentia*) are but imperfect expressions of what he imagines to be the essence of God. All theological phrases are analogies, figures of speech, and mere approximations.

"The *Proslogium sive Fides quaerens intellectum* has the same aim as the *Monologium*: to prove the existence of God. Our author draws the elements of his argument from St. Augustine and Platonism. He sets out from the idea of a perfect being, from which he infers the existence of such a being. We have in ourselves, he says, the idea of an absolutely perfect being. Now, perfection implies existence. Hence God exists. This argument, which has been termed the *ontological argument*, found an opponent worthy of Anselmus in Gaunilo, a monk of Marmoutiers in

Touraine. Gaunilo emphasises the difference between thought and being, and points out the fact that we may conceive and imagine a being, and yet that being may not exist. We have as much right to conclude from our idea of an enchanted island in the middle of the ocean that such an island actually exists. The criticism is just. Indeed, the ontological argument would be conclusive, only in case the idea of God and the existence of God in the human mind were identical. If our idea of God is God himself, it is evident that this idea is the immediate and incontrovertible proof of the existence of God. But what the theologian aims to prove is not the existence of the God-Idea of Plato and Hegel, but the existence of the personal God. However that may be, we hardly know what to admire most,—St. Anselmus's broad and profound conception, or the sagacity of his opponent who, in the seclusion of his cell, anticipates the Transcendental Dialectic of Kant.

“The rationalistic tendency which we have just noticed in the *Monologium* and the *Proslogium* meets us again in the *Cur Deus Homo?* Why did God become man? The first word of the title sufficiently indicates the philosophical trend of the treatise. The object is to search for the *causes* of the incarnation. The incarnation, according to St. Anselmus, necessarily follows from the necessity of redemption. Sin is an offence against the majesty of God. In spite of his goodness, God cannot pardon sin without compounding with honor and justice. On the other hand, he cannot revenge himself on man for his offended honor; for sin is an offence of infinite degree, and therefore demands infinite satisfaction; which means that he must either destroy humanity or inflict upon it the eternal punishments of hell. Now, in either case, the goal of creation, the happiness of his creatures, would be missed and the honor of the Creator compromised. There is but one way for God to escape this dilemma without affecting his honor, and that is to arrange for some kind of *satisfaction*. He must have infinite satisfaction, because the offence is immeasurable. Now, in so far as man is a finite being and incapable of satisfying divine justice in an infinite measure, the infinite being himself must take the matter in charge; he must have recourse to *substitution*. Hence, the necessity of the *incarnation*. God becomes man in Christ; Christ suffers and dies in our stead; thus he acquires an infinite merit and the right to an equivalent recompense. But since the world belongs to the Creator, and nothing can be added to its treasures, the recompense which by right belongs to Christ

falls to the lot of the human race in which he is incorporated: humanity is pardoned, forgiven, and saved.

"Theological criticism has repudiated Anselmus's theory, which bears the stamp of the spirit of chivalry and of feudal customs. But, notwithstanding the attacks of a superficial rationalism, there is an abiding element of truth in it: over and above each personal and variable will there is an absolute, immutable, and incorruptible will, called justice, honor, and duty, in conformity with the customs of the times."

CRITICISMS OF ANSELM'S ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR THE BEING OF GOD.

DESCARTES.¹

"But now, if from the simple fact that I can draw from my thought the idea of anything it follows that all that I recognise clearly and distinctly to pertain to this thing pertains to it in reality, can I not draw from this an argument and a demonstration of the existence of God? It is certain that I do not find in me the less the idea of him, that is, of a being supremely perfect, than that of any figure or of any number whatever; and I do not know less clearly and distinctly that an actual and eternal existence belongs to his nature than I know that all that I can demonstrate of any figure or of any number belongs truly to the nature of that figure or that number: and accordingly, although all that I have concluded in the preceding meditations may not turn out to be true, the existence of God ought to pass in my mind as being at least as certain as I have up to this time regarded the truths of mathematics to be, which have to do only with numbers and figures: although, indeed, that might not seem at first to be perfectly evident, but might appear to have some appearance of sophistry. For being accustomed in all other things to make a distinction between existence and essence, I easily persuade myself that existence may perhaps be separated from the essence of God, and thus God might be conceived as not existent actually. But nevertheless, when I think more attentively, I find that existence can no more be separated from the essence of God than from the essence of a rectilinear triangle can be separated the equality of its three

¹ *The Philosophy of Descartes in Extracts from His Writings.* H. A. P. Torrey. New York, 1892. P. 161 et seq.

angles to two right angles, or, indeed, if you please, from the idea of a mountain the idea of a valley; so that there would be no less contradiction in conceiving of a God—that is, of a being supremely perfect, to whom existence was wanting, that is to say, to whom there was wanting any perfection—than in conceiving of a mountain which had no valley.

“But although, in reality, I might not be able to conceive of a God without existence, no more than of a mountain without a valley, nevertheless, as from the simple fact that I conceive a mountain with a valley, it does not follow that there exists any mountain in the world, so likewise, although I conceive God as existent, it does not follow, it seems, from that, that God exists, for my thought does not impose any necessity on things; and as there is nothing to prevent my imagining a winged horse, although there is none which has wings, so I might, perhaps, be able to attribute existence to God, although there might not be any God which existed. So far from this being so, it is just here under the appearance of this objection that a sophism lies hid; for from the fact that I cannot conceive a mountain without a valley, it does not follow that there exists in the world any mountain or any valley, but solely that the mountain and the valley, whether they exist or not, are inseparable from one another; whereas, from the fact alone that I cannot conceive God except as existent, it follows that existence is inseparable from him, and, consequently, that he exists in reality; not that my thought can make it to be so, or that it can impose any necessity upon things; but on the contrary the necessity which is in the thing itself, that is to say, the necessity of the existence of God, determines me to have this thought.

“For it is not at my will to conceive of a God without existence, that is to say, a being supremely perfect without a supreme perfection, as it is at my will to conceive a horse with wings or without wings.

“And it must not also be said here that it is necessarily true that I should affirm that God exists, after I have supposed him to possess all kinds of perfection, since existence is one of these, but that my first supposition is not necessary, no more than it is necessary to affirm that all figures of four sides may be inscribed in the circle, but that, supposing I had this thought, I should be constrained to admit that the rhombus can be inscribed there, since it is a figure of four sides, and thus I should be constrained to admit something false. One ought not, I say, to allege this; for although

it may not be necessary that I should ever fall to thinking about God, nevertheless, when it happens that I think upon a being first and supreme, and draw, so to speak, the idea of him from the store-house of mind, it is necessary that I attribute to him every sort of perfection, although I may not go on to enumerate them all, and give attention to each one in particular. And this necessity is sufficient to bring it about (as soon as I recognise that I should next conclude that existence is a perfection) that this first and supreme being exists: while, just as it is not necessary that I ever imagine a triangle, but whenever I choose to consider a rectilinear figure, composed solely of three angles, it is absolutely necessary that I attribute to it all the things which serve for the conclusion that there three angles are not greater than two right angles, although, perhaps, I did not then consider this in particular."

SPINOZA.¹

"PROP. XI. *God, or substance, consisting of infinite attributes, of which each expresses eternal and infinite essentiality, necessarily exists.*

"*Proof.*—If this be denied, conceive, if possible, that God does not exist: then his essence does not involve existence. But this (by Prop. vii.) is absurd. Therefore God necessarily exists.

"*Another Proof.*—Of everything whatsoever a cause or reason must be assigned, either for its existence, or for its non-existence—e. g., if a triangle exist, a reason or cause must be granted for its existence; if, on the contrary, it does not exist, a cause must also be granted, which prevents it from existing, or annuls its existence. This reason or cause must either be contained in the nature of the thing in question, or be external to it. For instance, the reason for the non-existence of a square circle is indicated in its nature, namely, because it would involve a contradiction. On the other hand, the existence of substance follows also solely from its nature, inasmuch as its nature involves existence. (See Prop. vii.)

"But the reason for the existence of a triangle or a circle does not follow from the nature of those figures, but from the order of universal nature in extension. From the latter it must follow, either that a triangle necessarily exists, or that it is impossible

¹ *The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza.* Translated by R. H. M. Elwes. London, 1848. Vol. II., p. 51 et seq.

that it should exist. So much is self-evident. It follows therefrom that a thing necessarily exists, if no cause or reason be granted which prevents its existence.

"If, then, no cause or reason can be given, which prevents the existence of God, or which destroys his existence, we must certainly conclude that he necessarily does exist. If such a reason or cause should be given, it must either be drawn from the very nature of God, or be external to him—that is, drawn from another substance of another nature. For if it were of the same nature, God, by that very fact, would be admitted to exist. But substance of another nature could have nothing in common with God (by Prop. ii.), and therefore would be unable either to cause or to destroy his existence.

"As, then, a reason or cause which would annul the divine existence cannot be drawn from anything external to the divine nature, such cause must perforce, if God does not exist, be drawn from God's own nature, which would involve a contradiction. To make such an affirmation about a being absolutely infinite and supremely perfect, is absurd; therefore, neither in the nature of God, nor externally to his nature, can a cause or reason be assigned which would annul his existence. Therefore, God necessarily exists. *Q. E. D.*

"*Another proof.*—The potentiality of non-existence is a negation of power, and contrariwise the potentiality of existence is a power, as is obvious. If, then, that which necessarily exists is nothing but finite beings, such finite beings are more powerful than a being absolutely infinite, which is obviously absurd; therefore, either nothing exists, or else a being absolutely infinite necessarily exists also. Now we exist either in ourselves, or in something else which necessarily exists (see Axiom i. and Prop. vii.). Therefore a being absolutely infinite—in other words, God (Def. vi.)—necessarily exists. *Q. E. D.*

"*Note.*—In this last proof, I have purposely shown God's existence *a posteriori*, so that the proof might be more easily followed, not because, from the same premises, God's existence does not follow *a priori*. For, as the potentiality of existence is a power, it follows that, in proportion as reality increases in the nature of a thing, so also will it increase its strength for existence. Therefore a being absolutely infinite, such as God, has from himself an absolutely infinite power of existence, and hence he does absolutely exist. Perhaps there will be many who will be unable

to see the force of this proof, inasmuch as they are accustomed only to consider those things which flow from external causes. Of such things, they see that those which quickly come to pass—that is, quickly come into existence—quickly also disappear; whereas they regard as more difficult of accomplishment—that is, not so easily brought into existence—those things which they conceive as more complicated.

"However, to do away with this misconception, I need not here show the measure of truth in the proverb, 'What comes quickly, goes quickly,' nor discuss whether, from the point of view of universal nature, all things are equally easy, or otherwise: I need only remark, that I am not here speaking of things, which come to pass through causes external to themselves, but only of substances which (by Prop. vi.) cannot be produced by any external cause. Things which are produced by external causes, whether they consist of many parts or few, owe whatsoever perfection or reality they possess solely to the efficacy of their external cause, and therefore their existence arises solely from the perfection by their external cause, not from their own. Contrariwise, whatsoever perfection is possessed by substance is due to no external cause; wherefore the existence of substance must arise solely from its own nature, which is nothing else but its essence. Thus, the perfection of a thing does not annul its existence, but, on the contrary, asserts it. Imperfection, on the other hand, does annul it; therefore we cannot be more certain of the existence of anything, than of the existence of a being absolutely infinite or perfect—that is, of God. For inasmuch as his essence excludes all imperfection, and involves absolute perfection, all cause for doubt concerning his existence is done away, and the utmost certainty on the question is given. This, I think, will be evident to every moderately attentive reader."

LOCKE.¹

"*Our idea of a most perfect being, not the sole proof of a God.*—How far the idea of a most perfect being which a man may frame in his mind, does or does not prove the existence of a God, I will not here examine. For, in the different make of men's tempers, and application of their thoughts, some arguments prevail

¹ *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding.* London: Ward, Lock, & Co. P. 529 et seq.

more on one, and some on another, for the confirmation of the same truth. But yet, I think this I may say, that it is an ill way of establishing this truth and silencing atheists, to lay the whole stress of so important a point as this upon that sole foundation : and take some men's having that idea of God in their minds (for it is evident some men have none, and some worse than none, and the most very different) for the only proof of a Deity ; and out of an over-fondness of that darling invention, cashier, or at least endeavor to invalidate, all other arguments, and forbid us to hearken to those proofs, as being weak or fallacious, which our own existence and the sensible parts of the universe offer so clearly and cogently to our thoughts, that I deem it impossible for a considering man to withstand them."

LEIBNITZ.¹

"Although I am for innate ideas, and in particular for that of God, I do not think that the demonstrations of the Cartesians drawn from the idea of God are perfect. I have shown fully elsewhere (in the *Actes de Leipsic*, and in the *Mémoires de Trevoux*) that what Descartes has borrowed from Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, is very beautiful and really very ingenious, but that there is still a gap therein to be filled. This celebrated archbishop, who was without doubt one of the most able men of his time, congratulates himself, not without reason, for having discovered a means of proving the existence of God *a priori*, by means of its own notion, without recurring to its effects. And this is very nearly the force of his argument : God is the greatest or (as Descartes says) the most perfect of beings, or rather a being of supreme grandeur and perfection, including all degrees thereof. That is the notion of God. See now how existence follows from this notion. To exist is something more than not to exist, or rather, existence adds a degree to grandeur and perfection, and as Descartes states it, existence is itself a perfection. Therefore this degree of grandeur and perfection, or rather this perfection which consists in existence, is in this supreme all-great, all-perfect being : for otherwise some degree would be wanting to it, contrary to its definition. Consequently this supreme being exists. The Scholastics, not excepting even their Doctor Angelicus, have misunder-

¹ *New Essays Concerning Human Understanding*. Translated by A. G. Langley. New York, 1896. P. 502 et seq.

stood this argument, and have taken it as a paralogism ; in which respect they were altogether wrong, and Descartes, who studied quite a long time the scholastic philosophy at the Jesuit College of La Fleche, had great reason for re-establishing it. It is not a paralogism, but it is an imperfect demonstration, which assumes something that must still be proved in order to render it mathematically evident ; that is, it is tacitly assumed that this idea of the all-great or all-perfect being is possible, and implies no contradiction. And it is already something that by this remark it is proved that, *assuming that God is possible, he exists*, which is the privilege of divinity alone. We have the right to presume the possibility of every being, and especially that of God, until some one proves the contrary. So that this metaphysical argument already gives a morally demonstrative conclusion, which declares that according to the present state of our knowledge we must judge that God exists, and act in conformity thereto. But it is to be desired, nevertheless, that clever men achieve the demonstration with the strictness of a mathematical proof, and I think I have elsewhere said something that may serve this end."

KANT.¹

"*Being* is evidently not a real predicate, or a concept of something that can be added to the concept of a thing. It is merely the admission of a thing, and of certain determinations in it. Logically, it is merely the copula of a judgment. The proposition, *God is almighty*, contains two concepts, each having its object, namely, God and almightiness. The small word *is*, is not an additional predicate, but only serves to put the predicate *in relation* to the subject. If, then, I take the subject (God) with all its predicates (including that of almightiness), and say, *God is*, or there is a God, I do not put a new predicate to the concept of God, but I only put the subject by itself, with all its predicates, in relation to my concept, as its object. Both must contain exactly the same kind of thing, and nothing can have been added to the concept, which expresses possibility only, by my thinking its object as simply given and saying, it is. And thus the real does not contain more than the possible. A hundred real dollars do not contain a penny more than a hundred possible dollars. For as the latter signify

¹ *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated by F. Max Müller. New York, 1896. P. 483 et seq.

the concept, the former the object and its position by itself, it is clear that, in case the former contained more than the latter, my concept would not express the whole object, and would not therefore be its adequate concept. In my financial position no doubt there exists more by one hundred real dollars, than by their concept only (that is their possibility), because in reality the object is not only contained analytically in my concept, but is added to my concept (which is a determination of my state), synthetically; but the conceived hundred dollars are not in the least increased through the existence which is outside my concept.

"By whatever and by however many predicates I may think a thing (even in completely determining it), nothing is really added to it, if I add that the thing exists. Otherwise, it would not be the same that exists, but something more than was contained in the concept, and I could not say that the exact object of my concept existed. Nay, even if I were to think in a thing all reality, except one, that one missing reality would not be supplied by my saying that so defective a thing exists, but it would exist with the same defect with which I thought it; or what exists would be different from what I thought. If, then, I try to conceive a being, as the highest reality (without any defect), the question still remains, whether it exists or not. For though in my concept there may be wanting nothing of the possible real content of a thing in general, something is wanting in its relation to my whole state of thinking, namely, that the knowledge of that object should be possible *a posteriori* also. And here we perceive the cause of our difficulty. If we were concerned with an object of our senses, I could not mistake the existence of a thing for the mere concept of it; for by the concept the object is thought as only in harmony with the general conditions of a possible empirical knowledge, while by its existence it is thought as contained in the whole content of experience. Through this connection with the content of the whole experience, the concept of an object is not in the least increased; our thought has only received through it one more possible perception. If, however, we are thinking existence through the pure category alone, we need not wonder that we cannot find any characteristic to distinguish it from mere possibility.

"Whatever, therefore, our concept of an object may contain, we must always step outside it, in order to attribute to it existence. With objects of the senses, this takes place through their connection with any one of my perceptions, according to empirical laws;

with objects of pure thought, however, there is no means of knowing their existence, because it would have to be known entirely *a priori*, while our consciousness of every kind of existence, whether immediately by perception, or by conclusions which connect something with perception, belongs entirely to the unity of experience, and any existence outside that field, though it cannot be declared to be absolutely impossible, is a presupposition that cannot be justified by anything.

"The concept of a Supreme Being is, in many respects, a very useful idea, but, being an idea only, it is quite incapable of increasing, by itself alone, our knowledge with regard to what exists. It cannot even do so much as to inform us any further as to its possibility. The analytical characteristic of possibility, which consists in the absence of contradiction in mere positions (realities), cannot be denied to it; but the connection of all real properties in one and the same thing is a synthesis the possibility of which we cannot judge *a priori* because these realities are not given to us as such, and because, even if this were so, no judgment whatever takes place, it being necessary to look for the characteristic of the possibility of synthetical knowledge in experience only, to which the object of an idea can never belong. Thus we see that the celebrated Leibnitz is far from having achieved what we thought he had, namely, to understand *a priori* the possibility of so sublime an ideal Being.

"Time and labor therefore are lost on the famous ontological (Cartesian) proof of the existence of a Supreme Being from mere concepts; and a man might as well imagine that he could become richer in knowledge by mere ideas, as a merchant in capital, if, in order to improve his position, he were to add a few noughts to his cash account."

HEGEL.¹

"This proof was included among the various proofs up to the time of Kant, and—by some who have not yet reached the Kantian standpoint—it is so included even to the present day. It is different from what we find and read of amongst the ancients. For it was said that God is absolute thought as objective; for because things in the world are contingent, they are not the truth in and for itself—but this is found in the infinite. The scholastics also

¹ *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. Translated by E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson. London, 1896. Vol. III., p. 62 et seq.

knew well from the Aristotelian philosophy the metaphysical proposition that potentiality is nothing by itself, but is clearly one with actuality. Later, on the other hand, the opposition between thought itself and Being began to appear with Anselm. It is noteworthy that only now for the first time through the Middle Ages and in Christianity, the universal Notion and Being, as it is to ordinary conception, became established in this pure abstraction as these infinite extremes; and thus the highest law has come to consciousness. But we reach our profoundest depths in bringing the highest opposition into consciousness. Only no advance was made beyond the division as such, although Anselm also tried to find the connection between the sides. But while hitherto God appeared as the absolute existent, and the universal was attributed to Him as predicate, an opposite order begins with Anselm—Being becomes predicate, and the absolute Idea is first of all established as the subject, but the subject of thought. Thus if the existence of God is once abandoned as the first hypothesis, and established as a result of thought, self-consciousness is on the way to turn back within itself. Then we have the question coming in, Does God exist? while on the other side the question of most importance was, What is God?

"The ontological proof, which is the first properly metaphysical proof of the existence of God, consequently came to mean that God as the Idea of existence which unites all reality in itself, also has the reality of existence within Himself; this proof thus follows from the Notion of God, that He is the universal essence of all essence. The drift of this reasoning is, according to Anselm (*Proslogium*, C. 2), as follows: 'It is one thing to say that a thing is in the understanding, and quite another to perceive that it exists. Even an ignorant person (*insipiens*) will thus be quite convinced that in thought there is something beyond which nothing greater can be thought; for when he hears this he understands it, and everything that is understood is in the understanding. But that beyond which nothing greater can be thought cannot certainly be in the understanding alone. For if it is accepted as in thought alone, we may go on farther to accept it as existent; that, however, is something greater' than what is merely thought. 'Thus were that beyond which nothing greater can be thought merely in the understanding, that beyond which nothing greater can be thought would be something beyond which something greater can be thought. But that is truly impossible; there thus

without doubt exists both in the understanding and in reality something beyond which nothing greater can be thought.' The highest conception cannot be in the understanding alone; it is essential that it should exist. Thus it is made clear that Being is in a superficial way subsumed under the universal of reality, that to this extent Being does not enter into opposition with the Notion. That is quite right; only the transition is not demonstrated—that the subjective understanding abrogates itself. This, however, is just the question which gives the whole interest to the matter. When reality or completion is expressed in such a way that it is not yet posited as existent, it is something thought, and rather opposed to Being than that this is subsumed under it.

"This mode of arguing held good until the time of Kant; and we see in it the endeavor to apprehend the doctrine of the Church through reason. This opposition between Being and thought is the starting-point in philosophy, the absolute that contains the two opposites within itself—a conception, according to Spinoza, which involves its existence likewise. Of Anselm it is however to be remarked that the formal logical mode of the understanding, the process of scholastic reasoning is to be found in him; the content indeed is right, but the form faulty. For in the first place the expression 'the thought of a Highest' is assumed as the *præsumptum*. Secondly, there are two sorts of objects of thought—one that is and another that is not; the object that is only thought and does not exist, is as imperfect as that which only is without being thought. The third point is that what is highest must likewise exist. But what is highest, the standard to which all else must conform, must be no mere hypothesis, as we find it represented in the conception of a highest acme of perfection, as a content which is thought and likewise *is*. This very content, the unity of Being and thought, is thus indeed the true content. but because Anselm has it before him only in the form of the understanding, the opposites are identical and conformable to unity in a third determination only—the Highest—which, in as far as it is regulative, is outside of them. In this it is involved that we should first of all have subjective thought, and then distinguished from that, Being. We allow that if we think a content (and it is apparently indifferent whether this is God or any other), it may be the case that this content does not exist. The assertion 'Something that is thought does not exist' is now subsumed under the above standard and is not conformable to it. We grant that the truth is that which is not merely thought

but which likewise is. But of this opposition nothing here is said. Undoubtedly God would be imperfect, if He were merely thought and did not also have the determination of Being. But in relation to God we must not take thought as merely subjective; thought here signifies the absolute, pure thought, and thus we must ascribe to Him the quality of Being. On the other hand if God were merely Being, if He were not conscious of Himself as self-consciousness, He would not be Spirit, a thought that thinks itself.

"Kant, on the other hand, attacked and rejected Anselm's proof—which rejection the whole world afterwards followed up—on the ground of its being an assumption that the unity of Being and thought is the highest perfection. What Kant thus demonstrates in the present day—that Being is different from thought and that Being is not by any means posited with thought—was a criticism offered even in that time by a monk named Gaunilo. He combated this proof of Anselm's in a *Liber pro insipiente* to which Anselm himself directed a reply in his *Liber apologeticus adversus insipientem*. Thus Kant says (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, p. 464 of the sixth edition): If we think a hundred dollars, this conception does not involve existence. That is certainly true: what is only a conception does not exist, but it is likewise not a true content, for what does not exist, is merely an untrue conception. Of such we do not however here speak, but of pure thought; it is nothing new to say they are different—Anselm knew this just as well as we do. God is the infinite, just as body and soul, Being and thought are eternally united; this is the speculative, true definition of God. To the proof which Kant criticises in a manner which it is the fashion to follow now-a-days, there is thus lacking only the perception of the unity of thought and of existence in the infinite; and this alone must form the commencement."

J. A. DORNER.¹

"According to the *Monologium*, we arrive at the mental representation of God by the agency of faith and conscience, therefore by a combined religious and moral method; by the same means we arrive at the representation of the relativity of the world. But as there seemed to Anselm something inadequate in making the Being of the Absolute dependent upon the existence

¹*A System of Christian Doctrine*. Translated by A. Cave and J. S. Banks, Edinburgh, 1880. Vol. I., p. 216 et seq.

of the Relative, as if the latter were more certain than the former, he has interpolated in the *Proslogium* (*Alloquium Dei*) the Ontological method. The thought of God, which is always given, and the being of which is to be proved, claims, at any rate, to be the highest thought possible; indeed, upon close comparison with all other thoughts which come and go, with thoughts of such things as may just as well not exist as exist, it has the essential peculiarity, the prerogative, so to speak,—and this is Anselm's discovery,—that, if it is actually thought of as the highest conceivable thought, it is also thought of as existent. Were it not thought of as being, it would not for a moment be actually thought. Anselm then proceeds with his proof as follows: 'We believe Thou art something, beyond which nothing greater can be thought. The fool (Ps. xiv.) denies the existence of such a Being. Is He therefore non-existent? But the very fool hears and understands what I say, "something, greater than which there is nothing," and what he understands is in his understanding. That it also exists without him would thus have to be proved. But that, beyond which nothing greater can be thought, cannot exist in mere intellect. For did it exist only in intellect, the thought might be framed that it was realised, and that would be a greater thought. Consequently, were that, a greater than which cannot be thought, existent in mere intellect, the thought *quo majus cogitari non potest* would at the same time be *quo majus cogitari potest*, which is impossible. Consequently, there exists, in reality as well as in the understanding, something a greater than which cannot be thought. And this is so true that its non-existence cannot be thought. Something may be thought which is only to be thought as existent, and that is a *majus* than that the non-existence of which may be thought, and that Thou art, O Lord, my God, I must think though I did not believe.' The nerve of the Anselmic argument lies therefore in the notion that an idea which has an objective existence is a *majus* than that to which mere subjective existence appertains; that, consequently, as under the idea of God the highest thought possible is at any rate expressed, the idea of God is not thought unless it is thought as existent. For, he says in another place, it may be thought of everything that it does not exist, with the exception of that *quod summe est* to which being pre-eminently belongs. That is, the non-existence may be thought of everything which has beginning or end, or which is constituted of parts and is nowhere whole. But that, and it alone, cannot be thought as

non-existent which has neither beginning nor end, and is not constituted of parts, but is thought of as everywhere existing whole. Gaunilo, Count of Montigny, makes a twofold answer in defence of the atheist. He says that that highest essence has no being in the understanding; it only exists therein by the ear, not by being; it only exists as a man who has heard a sound endeavors to embrace a thing wholly unknown to him in an image. And therein, he says, it is concluded that the mental representation of God in mankind is already a purely contingent one, and is produced from without by the sound of words; its necessary presence in the spirit is not proved. Thus, he adds, much is wanting to the ability of inferring its existence from the finding of such an image in the spirit. In the sphere of mere imagination no one thing has a less or a greater existence than any other thing; each has equally no existence at all. Therefore, he writes, granted that the presence of the idea of God in the spirit is not contingent, still the thought or the concept of God does not essentially argue the being of God. Similarly says Kant later on: 'We are no richer if we think of our ability as one cipher more.' That Anselm also undoubtedly knew, but he opined that the concept of God is different to any other thought, which remains unaltered, whether it is thought of as existent or non-existent; the concept of God is that thought, which is no longer thought unless it is thought as existent, and which, therefore, essentially involves being. But, of course, it is insufficiently established by Anselm that a concept of God which does not necessarily include existence, is not the highest thought, and therefore is not the concept of God, and that, consequently, the really highest thought must also be thought of as existent. To this the following objection attaches. Inasmuch as Anselm treated existence as a *maius* compared with non-existence, he treated existence as an attribute, whereas it is the bearer of all attributes. So it is not proved by Anselm that the origin of this idea, which, when thought, is thought as existent, is not contingent to the reason, but necessary; and that reason only remains reason by virtue of this idea. Finally, Anselm thinks, thus overrating the Ontological moment, that he has already attained therein the full concept of God. These shortcomings were to be obviated, stage by stage, by his successors."

LOTZE.¹

"To conclude that because the notion of a most perfect Being includes reality as one of its perfections, therefore a most perfect Being necessarily *exists*, is so obviously to conclude falsely, that after Kant's incisive refutation any attempt to defend such reasoning would be useless. Anselm, in his more free and spontaneous reflection, has here and there touched the thought that the greatest which we can think, if we think it as *only* thought, is less than the same greatest if we think it as existent. It is not possible that from this reflection either any one should develop a logically cogent proof, but the way in which it is put seems to reveal another fundamental thought which is seeking for expression. For what would it matter if that which is thought as most perfect were, as thought, less than the least reality? Why should this thought disturb us? Plainly for this reason, that it is an immediate certainty that what is greatest, most beautiful, most worthy is not a mere thought, but must be a reality, because it would be intolerable to believe of our ideal that it is an idea produced by the action of thought but having no existence, no power, and no validity in the world of reality. We do not from the perfection of that which is perfect immediately deduce its reality as a logical consequence; but without the circumlocution of a deduction we directly feel the impossibility of its non-existence, and all semblance of syllogistic proof only serves to make more clear the directness of this certainty. If what is greatest did not *exist*, then what is *greatest* would not be, and it is not impossible that that which is greatest of all conceivable things should *not* be."

PROFESSOR ROBERT FLINT.²

"Anselm was the founder of that kind of argumentation which, in the opinion of many, is alone entitled to be described as a *priori* or ontological. He reasoned thus: 'The fool may say in his heart, There is no God; but he only proves thereby that he is a fool, for what he says is self-contradictory. Since he denies that there is a God, he has in his mind the idea of God, and that idea implies the

¹ *Microcosmus*. Translated by E. Hamilton and E. E. C. Jones. Edinburgh, 1887. Vol. II., p. 669 et seq.

² *Theism*. New York, 1893. Seventh edition. P. 278 et seq.

existence of God, for it is the idea of a Being than which a higher cannot be conceived. That than which a higher cannot be conceived cannot exist merely as an idea, because what exists merely as an idea is inferior to what exists in reality as well as in idea. The idea of a highest Being which exists merely in thought, is the idea of a highest Being which is not the highest even in thought, but inferior to a highest Being which exists in fact as well as in thought.' This reasoning found unfavorable critics even among the contemporaries of Anselm, and has commended itself completely to few. Yet it may fairly be doubted whether it has been conclusively refuted, and some of the objections most frequently urged against it are certainly inadmissible. It is no answer to it, for example, to deny that the idea of God is innate or universal. The argument merely assumes that he who denies that there is a God must have an idea of God. There is also no force, as Anselm showed, in the objection of Gaunilo, that the existence of God can no more be inferred from the idea of a perfect being, than the existence of a perfect island is to be inferred from the idea of such an island. There neither is nor can be an idea of an island which is greater and better than any other that can ever be conceived. Anselm could safely promise that he would make Gaunilo a present of such an island when he had really imagined it. Only one being—an infinite, independent, necessary being—can be perfect in the sense of being greater and better than every other conceivable being. The objection that the ideal can never logically yield the real—that the transition from thought to fact must be in every instance illegitimate—is merely an assertion that the argument is fallacious. It is an assertion which cannot fairly be made until the argument has been exposed and refuted. The argument is that a certain thought of God is found necessarily to imply His existence. The objection that existence is not a predicate, and that the idea of a God who exists is not more complete and perfect than the idea of a God who does not exist, is, perhaps, not incapable of being satisfactorily repelled. Mere existence is not a predicate, but specifications or determinations of existence are predicable. Now the argument nowhere implies that existence is a predicate; it implies only that reality, necessity, and independence of existence are predicates of existence; and it implies this on the ground that existence *in re* can be distinguished from existence *in conceptu*, necessary from contingent existence, self-existence from derived existence. Specific distinctions must surely admit of being

predicated. That the exclusion of existence—which here means real and necessary existence—from the idea of God does not leave us with an incomplete idea of God, is not a position, I think, which can be maintained. Take away existence from among the elements in the idea of a perfect being, and the idea becomes either the idea of a nonentity or the idea of an idea, and not the idea of a perfect being at all. Thus, the argument of Anselm is unwarrantably represented as an argument of four terms instead of three. Those who urge the objection seem to me to prove only that if our thought of God be imperfect, a being who merely realised that thought would be an imperfect being; but there is a vast distance between this truism and the paradox that an unreal being may be an ideally perfect being."

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¹ Ueberweg gives the titles of German and Latin dissertations on Anselm not included in this list.

PROSLOGIUM. MONOLOGIUM.
AN APPENDIX IN BEHALF OF THE
FOOL BY GAUNILON.

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1. The first part of the paper is devoted to a general discussion of the problem of the existence of a solution of the system of equations (1) for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β . It is shown that the system has a solution for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β if and only if the condition

$$\alpha + \beta \geq 0$$

is satisfied. The second part of the paper is devoted to a detailed analysis of the

ANSELM'S PROSLOGIUM

OR DISCOURSE ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

PREFACE.

In this brief work the author aims at proving in a single argument the existence of God, and whatsoever we believe of God.—The difficulty of the task.—The author writes in the person of one who contemplates God, and seeks to understand what he believes. To this work he had given this title: Faith Seeking Understanding. He finally named it Proslogium,—that is, A Discourse.

AFTER I had published, at the solicitous entreaties of certain brethren, a brief work (the *Monologium*) as an example of meditation on the grounds of faith, in the person of one who investigates, in a course of silent reasoning with himself, matters of which he is ignorant; considering that this book was knit together by the linking of many arguments, I began to ask myself whether there might be found a single argument which would require no other for its proof than itself alone; and alone would suffice to demonstrate that God truly exists, and that there is a supreme good requiring nothing else, which all other things require for their existence and well-being; and whatever we believe regarding the divine Being.

Although I often and earnestly directed my thought to this end, and at some times that which I sought

seemed to be just within my reach, while again it wholly evaded my mental vision, at last in despair I was about to cease, as if from the search for a thing which could not be found. But when I wished to exclude this thought altogether, lest, by busying my mind to no purpose, it should keep me from other thoughts, in which I might be successful; then more and more, though I was unwilling and shunned it, it began to force itself upon me, with a kind of importunity. So, one day, when I was exceedingly wearied with resisting its importunity, in the very conflict of my thoughts, the proof of which I had despaired offered itself, so that I eagerly embraced the thoughts which I was strenuously repelling.

Thinking, therefore, that what I rejoiced to have found, would, if put in writing, be welcome to some readers, of this very matter, and of some others, I have written the following treatise, in the person of one who strives to lift his mind to the contemplation of God, and seeks to understand what he believes. In my judgment, neither this work nor the other, which I mentioned above, deserved to be called a book, or to bear the name of an author; and yet I thought they ought not to be sent forth without some title by which they might, in some sort, invite one into whose hands they fell to their perusal. I accordingly gave each a title, that the first might be known as, *An Example of Meditation on the Grounds of Faith*, and its sequel as, *Faith Seeking Understanding*. But, after both had been copied by many under these titles, many urged me, and especially Hugo, the reverend Archbishop of Lyons, who discharges the apostolic office in Gaul, who instructed me to this effect on his apostolic authority—to prefix my name to these writ-

ings. And that this might be done more fitly, I named the first, *Monologium*, that is, A Soliloquy; but the second, *Proslogium*, that is, A Discourse.

CHAPTER I.

Exhortation of the mind to the contemplation of God.—It casts aside cares, and excludes all thoughts save that of God, that it may seek Him. Man was created to see God. Man by sin lost the blessedness for which he was made, and found the misery for which he was not made. He did not keep this good when he could keep it easily. Without God it is ill with us. Our labors and attempts are in vain without God. Man cannot seek God, unless God himself teaches him; nor find him, unless he reveals himself. God created man in his image, that he might be mindful of him, think of him, and love him. The believer does not seek to understand, that he may believe, but he believes that he may understand: for unless he believed he would not understand.

UP now, slight man! flee, for a little while, thy occupations; hide thyself, for a time, from thy disturbing thoughts. Cast aside, now, thy burdensome cares, and put away thy toilsome business. Yield room for some little time to God; and rest for a little time in him. Enter the inner chamber of thy mind; shut out all thoughts save that of God, and such as can aid thee in seeking him; close thy door and seek him. Speak now, my whole heart! speak now to God, saying, I seek thy face; thy face, Lord, will I seek (Psalms xxvii. 8). And come thou now, O Lord my God, teach my heart where and how it may seek thee, where and how it may find thee.

Lord, if thou art not here, where shall I seek thee, being absent? But if thou art everywhere, why do I not see thee present? Truly thou dwellest in unap-

proachable light. But where is unapproachable light, or how shall I come to it? Or who shall lead me to that light and into it, that I may see thee in it? Again, by what marks, under what form, shall I seek thee? I have never seen thee, O Lord, my God; I do not know thy form. What, O most high Lord, shall this man do, an exile far from thee? What shall thy servant do, anxious in his love of thee, and cast out afar from thy face? He pants to see thee, and thy face is too far from him. He longs to come to thee, and thy dwelling-place is inaccessible. He is eager to find thee, and knows not thy place. He desires to seek thee, and does not know thy face. Lord, thou art my God, and thou art my Lord, and never have I seen thee. It is thou that hast made me, and hast made me anew, and hast bestowed upon me all the blessings I enjoy; and not yet do I know thee. Finally, I was created to see thee, and not yet have I done that for which I was made.

O wretched lot of man, when he hath lost that for which he was made! O hard and terrible fate! Alas, what has he lost, and what has he found? What has departed, and what remains? He has lost the blessedness for which he was made, and has found the misery for which he was not made. That has departed without which nothing is happy, and that remains which, in itself, is only miserable. Man once did eat the bread of angels, for which he hungers now; he eateth now the bread of sorrows, of which he knew not then. Alas! for the mourning of all mankind, for the universal lamentation of the sons of Hades! He choked with satiety, we sigh with hunger. He abounded, we beg. He possessed in happiness, and miserably forsook his possession; we suffer want in unhappiness,

and feel a miserable longing, and alas! we remain empty.

Why did he not keep for us, when he could so easily, that whose lack we should feel so heavily? Why did he shut us away from the light, and cover us over with darkness? With what purpose did he rob us of life, and inflict death upon us? Wretches that we are, whence have we been driven out; whither are we driven on? Whence hurled? Whither consigned to ruin? From a native country into exile, from the vision of God into our present blindness, from the joy of immortality into the bitterness and horror of death. Miserable exchange of how great a good, for how great an evil! Heavy loss, heavy grief heavy all our fate!

But alas! wretched that I am, one of the sons of Eve, far removed from God! What have I undertaken? What have I accomplished? Whither was I striving? How far have I come? To what did I aspire? Amid what thoughts am I sighing? I sought blessings, and lo! confusion. I strove toward God, and I stumbled on myself. I sought calm in privacy, and I found tribulation and grief, in my inmost thoughts. I wished to smile in the joy of my mind, and I am compelled to frown by the sorrow of my heart. Gladness was hoped for, and lo! a source of frequent sighs!

And thou too, O Lord, how long? How long, O Lord, dost thou forget us; how long dost thou turn thy face from us? When wilt thou look upon us, and hear us? When wilt thou enlighten our eyes, and show us thy face? When wilt thou restore thyself to us? Look upon us, Lord; hear us, enlighten us, reveal thyself to us. Restore thyself to us, that it may

be well with us,—thyself, without whom it is so ill with us. Pity our toilings and strivings toward thee, since we can do nothing without thee. Thou dost invite us; do thou help us. I beseech thee, O Lord, that I may not lose hope in sighs, but may breathe anew in hope. Lord, my heart is made bitter by its desolation; sweeten thou it, I beseech thee, with thy consolation. Lord, in hunger I began to seek thee; I beseech thee that I may not cease to hunger for thee. In hunger I have come to thee; let me not go unfed. I have come in poverty to the Rich, in misery to the Compassionate; let me not return empty and despised. And if, before I eat, I sigh, grant, even after sighs, that which I may eat. Lord, I am bowed down and can only look downward; raise me up that I may look upward. My iniquities have gone over my head; they overwhelm me; and, like a heavy load, they weigh me down. Free me from them; unburden me, that the pit of iniquities may not close over me.

Be it mine to look up to thy light, even from afar, even from the depths. Teach me to seek thee, and reveal thyself to me, when I seek thee, for I cannot seek thee, except thou teach me, nor find thee, except thou reveal thyself. Let me seek thee in longing, let me long for thee in seeking; let me find thee in love, and love thee in finding. Lord, I acknowledge and I thank thee that thou hast created me in this thine image, in order that I may be mindful of thee, may conceive of thee, and love thee; but that image has been so consumed and wasted away by vices, and obscured by the smoke of wrong-doing, that it cannot achieve that for which it was made, except thou renew it, and create it anew. I do not endeavor, O Lord, to penetrate thy sublimity, for in no wise do I

compare my understanding with that; but I long to understand in some degree thy truth, which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand. For this also I believe,—that unless I believed, I should not understand.

CHAPTER II.

Truly there is a God, although the fool hath said in his heart,
There is no God.

AND so, Lord, do thou, who dost give understanding to faith, give me, so far as thou knowest it to be profitable, to understand that thou art as we believe; and that thou art that which we believe. And, indeed, we believe that thou art a being than which nothing greater can be conceived. Or is there no such nature, since the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God? (Psalms xiv. 1). But, at any rate, this very fool, when he hears of this being of which I speak—a being than which nothing greater can be conceived—understands what he hears, and what he understands is in his understanding; although he does not understand it to exist.

For, it is one thing for an object to be in the understanding, and another to understand that the object exists. When a painter first conceives of what he will afterwards perform, he has it in his understanding, but he does not yet understand it to be, because he has not yet performed it. But after he has made the painting, he both has it in his understanding, and he understands that it exists, because he has made it.

Hence, even the fool is convinced that something exists in the understanding, at least, than which nothing greater can be conceived. For, when he hears of this, he understands it. And whatever is understood, exists in the understanding. And assuredly that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, cannot exist in the understanding alone. For, suppose it exists in the understanding alone: then it can be conceived to exist in reality; which is greater.

Therefore, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, exists in the understanding alone, the very being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, is one, than which a greater can be conceived. But obviously this is impossible. Hence, there is no doubt that there exists a being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, and it exists both in the understanding and in reality.

CHAPTER III.

God cannot be conceived not to exist.—God is that, than which nothing greater can be conceived.—That which can be conceived not to exist is not God.

AND it assuredly exists so truly, that it cannot be conceived not to exist. For, it is possible to conceive of a being which cannot be conceived not to exist; and this is greater than one which can be conceived not to exist. Hence, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, can be conceived not to exist, it is not that, than which nothing greater can be conceived. But this is an irreconcilable contradiction. There is, then, so truly a being than which nothing greater can be conceived to exist, that it cannot even

be conceived not to exist ; and this being thou art, O Lord, our God.

So truly, therefore, dost thou exist, O Lord, my God, that thou canst not be conceived not to exist ; and rightly. For, if a mind could conceive of a being better than thee, the creature would rise above the Creator ; and this is most absurd. And, indeed, whatever else there is, except thee alone, can be conceived not to exist. To thee alone, therefore, it belongs to exist more truly than all other beings, and hence in a higher degree than all others. For, whatever else exists does not exist so truly, and hence in a less degree it belongs to it to exist. Why, then, has the fool said in his heart, there is no God (Psalms xiv. 1), since it is so evident, to a rational mind, that thou dost exist in the highest degree of all ? Why, except that he is dull and a fool ?

CHAPTER IV.

How the fool has said in his heart what cannot be conceived.—A thing may be conceived in two ways : (1) when the word signifying it is conceived ; (2) when the thing itself is understood. As far as the word goes, God can be conceived not to exist ; in reality he cannot.

BUT how has the fool said in his heart what he could not conceive ; or how is it that he could not conceive what he said in his heart ? since it is the same to say in the heart, and to conceive.

But, if really, nay, since really, he both conceived, because he said in his heart ; and did not say in his heart, because he could not conceive ; there is more than one way in which a thing is said in the heart or conceived. For, in one sense, an object is conceived,

when the word signifying it is conceived; and in another, when the very entity, which the object is, is understood.

In the former sense, then, God can be conceived not to exist; but in the latter, not at all. For no one who understands what fire and water are can conceive fire to be water, in accordance with the nature of the facts themselves, although this is possible according to the words. So, then, no one who understands what God is can conceive that God does not exist; although he says these words in his heart, either without any. or with some foreign, signification. For, God is that than which a greater cannot be conceived. And he who thoroughly understands this, assuredly understands that this being so truly exists, that not even in concept can it be non-existent. Therefore, he who understands that God so exists, cannot conceive that he does not exist.

I thank thee, gracious Lord, I thank thee; because what I formerly believed by thy bounty, I now so understand by thine illumination, that if I were unwilling to believe that thou dost exist, I should not be able not to understand this to be true.

CHAPTER V.

God is whatever it is better to be than not to be; and he, as the only self-existent being, creates all things from nothing.

WHAT art thou, then, Lord God, than whom nothing greater can be conceived? But what art thou, except that which, as the highest of all beings, alone exists through itself, and creates all other things from nothing? For, whatever is not this is less than a thing which can be conceived of. But this cannot be con-

ceived of thee. What good, therefore, does the supreme Good lack, through which every good is? Therefore, thou art just, truthful, blessed, and whatever it is better to be than not to be. For it is better to be just than not just; better to be blessed than not blessed.

CHAPTER VI.

How God is sensible (*sensibilis*) although he is not a body.—God is sensible, omnipotent, compassionate, passionless; for it is better to be these than not be. He who in any way knows, is not improperly said in some sort to feel.

BUT, although it is better for thee to be sensible, omnipotent, compassionate, passionless, than not to be these things; how art thou sensible, if thou art not a body; or omnipotent, if thou hast not all powers; or at once compassionate and passionless? For, if only corporeal things are sensible, since the senses encompass a body and are in a body, how art thou sensible, although thou art not a body, but a supreme Spirit, who is superior to body? But, if feeling is only cognition, or for the sake of cognition,—for he who feels obtains knowledge in accordance with the proper functions of his senses; as through sight, of colors; through taste, of flavors,—whatever in any way cognises is not inappropriately said, in some sort, to feel.

Therefore, O Lord, although thou art not a body, yet thou art truly sensible in the highest degree in respect of this, that thou dost cognise all things in the highest degree; and not as an animal cognises, through a corporeal sense.

CHAPTER VII.

How he is omnipotent, although there are many things of which he is not capable.—To be capable of being corrupted, or of lying, is not power, but impotence. God can do nothing by virtue of impotence, and nothing has power against him.

BUT how art thou omnipotent, if thou art not capable of all things? Or, if thou canst not be corrupted, and canst not lie, nor make what is true, false—as, for example, if thou shouldst make what has been done not to have been done, and the like—how art thou capable of all things? Or else to be capable of these things is not power, but impotence. For, he who is capable of these things is capable of what is not for his good, and of what he ought not to do; and the more capable of them he is, the more power have adversity and perversity against him; and the less has he himself against these.

He, then, who is thus capable is so not by power, but by impotence. For, he is not said to be able because he is able of himself, but because his impotence gives something else power over him. Or, by a figure of speech, just as many words are improperly applied, as when we use “to be” for “not to be,” and “to do” for what is really “not to do,” or “to do nothing.” For, often we say to a man who denies the existence of something: “It is as you say it to be,” though it might seem more proper to say, “It is not, as you say it is not.” In the same way, we say: “This man sits just as that man does,” or, “This man rests just as that man does”; although to sit is not to do anything, and to rest is to do nothing.

So, then, when one is said to have the power of

doing or experiencing what is not for his good, or what he ought not to do, impotence is understood in the word power. For, the more he possesses this power, the more powerful are adversity and perversity against him, and the more powerless is he against them.

Therefore, O Lord, our God, the more truly art thou omnipotent, since thou art capable of nothing through impotence, and nothing has power against thee.

CHAPTER VIII.

How he is compassionate and passionless. God is compassionate, in terms of our experience, because we experience the effect of compassion. God is not compassionate, in terms of his own being, because he does not experience the feeling (*affectus*) of compassion.

BUT how art thou compassionate, and, at the same time, passionless? For, if thou art passionless, thou dost not feel sympathy; and if thou dost not feel sympathy, thy heart is not wretched from sympathy for the wretched; but this it is to be compassionate. But if thou art not compassionate, whence cometh so great consolation to the wretched? How, then, art thou compassionate and not compassionate, O Lord, unless because thou art compassionate in terms of our experience, and not compassionate in terms of thy being.

Truly, thou art so in terms of our experience, but thou art not so in terms of thine own. For, when thou beholdest us in our wretchedness, we experience the effect of compassion, but thou dost not experience the feeling. Therefore, thou art both compassionate, because thou dost save the wretched, and spare those

who sin against thee ; and not compassionate, because thou art affected by no sympathy for wretchedness.

CHAPTER IX.

How the all-just and supremely just God spares the wicked, and justly pities the wicked. He is better who is good to the righteous and the wicked than he who is good to the righteous alone. Although God is supremely just, the source of his compassion is hidden. God is supremely compassionate, because he is supremely just. He saveth the just, because justice goes with them ; he frees sinners by the authority of justice. God spares the wicked out of justice ; for it is just that God, than whom none is better or more powerful, should be good even to the wicked, and should make the wicked good. If God ought not to pity, he pities unjustly. But this it is impious to suppose. Therefore, God justly pities.

BUT how dost thou spare the wicked, if thou art all just and supremely just? For how, being all just and supremely just, dost thou aught that is not just? Or, what justice is that to give him who merits eternal death everlasting life? How, then, gracious Lord, good to the righteous and the wicked, canst thou save the wicked, if this is not just, and thou dost not aught that is not just? Or, since thy goodness is incomprehensible, is this hidden in the unapproachable light wherein thou dwellest? Truly, in the deepest and most secret parts of thy goodness is hidden the fountain whence the stream of thy compassion flows.

For thou art all just and supremely just, yet thou art kind even to the wicked, even because thou art all supremely good. For thou wouldst be less good if thou wert not kind to any wicked being. For, he who is good, both to the righteous and the wicked, is better than he who is good to the wicked alone;

and he who is good to the wicked, both by punishing and sparing them, is better than he who is good by punishing them alone. Therefore, thou art compassionate, because thou art all supremely good. And, although it appears why thou dost reward the good with goods and the evil with evils; yet this, at least, is most wonderful, why thou, the all and supremely just, who lackest nothing, bestowest goods on the wicked and on those who are guilty toward thee.

The depth of thy goodness, O God! The source of thy compassion appears, and yet is not clearly seen! We see whence the river flows, but the spring whence it arises is not seen. For, it is from the abundance of thy goodness that thou art good to those who sin against thee; and in the depth of thy goodness is hidden the reason for this kindness.

For, although thou dost reward the good with goods and the evil with evils, out of goodness, yet this the concept of justice seems to demand. But, when thou dost bestow goods on the evil, and it is known that the supremely Good hath willed to do this, we wonder why the supremely Just has been able to will this.

O compassion, from what abundant sweetness and what sweet abundance dost thou well forth to us! O boundless goodness of God, how passionately should sinners love thee! For thou savest the just, because justice goeth with them; but sinners thou dost free by the authority of justice. Those by the help of their deserts; these, although their deserts oppose. Those by acknowledging the goods thou hast granted; these by pardoning the evils thou hatest. O boundless goodness, which dost so exceed all understanding, let that compassion come upon me, which pro-

ceeds from thy so great abundance ! Let it flow upon me, for it wells forth from thee. Spare, in mercy ; avenge not, in justice.

For, though it is hard to understand how thy compassion is not inconsistent with thy justice ; yet we must believe that it does not oppose justice at all, because it flows from goodness, which is no goodness without justice ; nay, that it is in true harmony with justice. For, if thou art compassionate only because thou art supremely good, and supremely good only because thou art supremely just, truly thou art compassionate even because thou art supremely just. Help me, just and compassionate God, whose light I seek ; help me to understand what I say.

Truly, then, thou art compassionate even because thou art just. Is, then, thy compassion born of thy justice ? And dost thou spare the wicked, therefore, out of justice ? If this is true, my Lord, if this is true, teach me how it is. Is it because it is just, that thou shouldst be so good that thou canst not be conceived better ; and that thou shouldst work so powerfully that thou canst not be conceived more powerful ? For what can be more just than this ? Assuredly it could not be that thou shouldst be good only by requiting (*retribuendo*) and not by sparing, and that thou shouldst make good only those who are not good, and not the wicked also. In this way, therefore, it is just that thou shouldst spare the wicked, and make good souls of evil.

Finally, what is not done justly ought not to be done ; and what ought not to be done is done unjustly. If, then, thou dost not justly pity the wicked, thou oughtest not to pity them. And, if thou oughtest not to pity them, thou pityest them unjustly. And if

it is impious to suppose this, it is right to believe that thou justly pityest the wicked.

CHAPTER X.

How he justly punishes and justly spares the wicked.—God, in sparing the wicked, is just, according to his own nature, because he does what is consistent with his goodness; but he is not just, according to our nature, because he does not inflict the punishment deserved.

BUT it is also just that thou shouldst punish the wicked. For what is more just than that the good should receive goods, and the evil, evils? How, then, is it just that thou shouldst punish the wicked, and, at the same time, spare the wicked? Or, in one way, dost thou justly punish, and, in another, justly spare them? For, when thou punishest the wicked, it is just, because it is consistent with their deserts; and when, on the other hand, thou sparest the wicked, it is just, not because it is compatible with their deserts, but because it is compatible with thy goodness.

For, in sparing the wicked, thou art as just, according to thy nature, but not according to ours, as thou art compassionate, according to our nature, and not according to thine; seeing that, as in saving us, whom it would be just for thee to destroy, thou art compassionate, not because thou feelest an affection (*affectum*), but because we feel the effect (*effectum*); so thou art just, not because thou requitest us as we deserve, but because thou dost that which becomes thee as the supremely good Being. In this way, therefore, without contradiction thou dost justly punish and justly spare.

CHAPTER XI.

How all the ways of God are compassion and truth ; and yet God is just in all his ways.—We cannot comprehend why, of the wicked, he saves these rather than those, through his supreme goodness ; and condemns those rather than these, through his supreme justice.

BUT, is there any reason why it is not also just, according to thy nature, O Lord, that thou shouldst punish the wicked? Surely it is just that thou shouldst be so just that thou canst not be conceived more just ; and this thou wouldst in no wise be if thou didst only render goods to the good, and not evils to the evil. For, he who requiteth both good and evil according to their deserts is more just than he who so requites the good alone. It is, therefore, just, according to thy nature, O just and gracious God, both when thou dost punish and when thou sparest.

Truly, then, all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth (Psalms xxv. 10) ; and yet the Lord is righteous in all his ways (Psalms cxlv. 17). And assuredly without inconsistency : For, it is not just that those whom thou dost will to punish should be saved, and that those whom thou dost will to spare should be condemned. For that alone is just which thou dost will ; and that alone unjust which thou dost not will. So, then, thy compassion is born of thy justice.

For it is just that thou shouldst be so good that thou art good in sparing also ; and this may be the reason why the supremely Just can will goods for the veil. But if it can be comprehended in any way why thou canst will to save the wicked, yet by no consideration can we comprehend why, of those who are

alike wicked, thou savest some rather than others, through supreme goodness; and why thou dost condemn the latter rather than the former, through supreme justice.

So, then, thou art truly sensible (*sensibilis*), omnipotent, compassionate, and passionless, as thou art living, wise, good, blessed, eternal: and whatever it is better to be than not to be.

CHAPTER XII.

God is the very life whereby he lives; and so of other like attributes.

BUT undoubtedly, whatever thou art, thou art through nothing else than thyself. Therefore, thou art the very life whereby thou livest; and the wisdom wherewith thou art wise; and the very goodness whereby thou art good to the righteous and the wicked; and so of other like attributes.

CHAPTER XIII.

How he alone is uncircumscribed and eternal, although other spirits are uncircumscribed and eternal.—No place and time contain God. But he is himself everywhere and always. He alone not only does not cease to be, but also does not begin to be.

BUT everything that is in any way bounded by place or time is less than that which no law of place or time limits. Since, then, nothing is greater than thou, no place or time contains thee; but thou art everywhere and always. And since this can be said of thee alone, thou alone art uncircumscribed and eternal. How is it, then, that other spirits also are said to be uncircumscribed and eternal?

Assuredly thou art alone eternal; for thou alone among all beings not only dost not cease to be, but also dost not begin to be.

But how art thou alone uncircumscribed? Is it that a created spirit, when compared with thee, is circumscribed, but when compared with matter, uncircumscribed? For altogether circumscribed is that which, when it is wholly in one place, cannot at the same time be in another. And this is seen to be true of corporeal things alone. But uncircumscribed is that which is, as a whole, at the same time everywhere. And this is understood to be true of thee alone. But circumscribed, and, at the same time, uncircumscribed is that which, when it is anywhere as a whole, can at the same time be somewhere else as a whole, and yet not everywhere. And this is recognised as true of created spirits. For, if the soul were not as a whole in the separate members of the body, it would not feel as a whole in the separate members.

Therefore, thou, Lord, art peculiarly uncircumscribed and eternal; and yet other spirits also are uncircumscribed and eternal.

CHAPTER XIV.

How and why God is seen and yet not seen by those who seek him.

HAST thou found what thou didst seek, my soul? Thou didst seek God. Thou hast found him to be a being which is the highest of all beings, a being than which nothing better can be conceived; that this being is life itself, light, wisdom, goodness, eternal blessedness and blessed eternity; and that it is everywhere and always.

For, if thou hast not found thy God, how is he this being which thou hast found, and which thou hast conceived him to be, with so certain truth and so true certainty? But, if thou hast found him, why is it that thou dost not feel thou hast found him? Why, O Lord, our God, does not my soul feel thee, if it hath found thee? Or, has it not found him whom it found to be light and truth? For how did it understand this, except by seeing light and truth? Or, could it understand anything at all of thee, except through thy light and thy truth?

Hence, if it has seen light and truth, it has seen thee; if it has not seen thee, it has not seen light and truth. Or, is what it has seen both light and truth; and still it has not yet seen thee, because it has seen thee only in part, but has not seen thee as thou art? Lord my God, my creator and renewer, speak to the desire of my soul, what thou art other than it hath seen, that it may clearly see what it desires. It strains to see thee more; and sees nothing beyond this which it hath seen, except darkness. Nay, it does not see darkness, of which there is none in thee; but it sees that it cannot see farther, because of its own darkness.

Why is this, Lord, why is this? Is the eye of the soul darkened by its infirmity, or dazzled by thy glory? Surely it is both darkened in itself, and dazzled by thee. Doubtless it is both obscured by its own insignificance, and overwhelmed by thy infinity. Truly, it is both contracted by its own narrowness and overcome by thy greatness.

For how great is that light from which shines every truth that gives light to the rational mind? How great is that truth in which is everything that is

true, and outside which is only nothingness and the false? How boundless is the truth which sees at one glance whatsoever has been made, and by whom, and through whom, and how it has been made from nothing? What purity, what certainty, what splendor where it is? Assuredly more than a creature can conceive.

CHAPTER XV.

He is greater than can be conceived.

THEREFORE, O Lord, thou art not only that than which a greater cannot be conceived, but thou art a being greater than can be conceived. For, since it can be conceived that there is such a being, if thou art not this very being, a greater than thou can be conceived. But this is impossible.

CHAPTER XVI.

This is the unapproachable light wherein he dwells.

TRULY, O Lord, this is the unapproachable light in which thou dwellest; for truly there is nothing else which can penetrate this light, that it may see thee there. Truly, I see it not, because it is too bright for me. And yet, whatsoever I see, I see through it, as the weak eye sees what it sees through the light of the sun, which in the sun itself it cannot look upon. My understanding cannot reach that light, for it shines too bright. It does not comprehend it, nor does the eye of my soul endure to gaze upon it long. It is dazzled by the brightness, it is overcome by the greatness, it is overwhelmed by the infinity, it is dazed by the largeness, of the light.

O supreme and unapproachable light! O whole

and blessed truth, how far art thou from me, who am so near to thee ! How far removed art thou from my vision, though I am so near to thine ! Everywhere thou art wholly present, and I see thee not. In thee I move, and in thee I have my being ; and I cannot come to thee. Thou art within me, and about me, and I feel thee not.

CHAPTER XVII.

In God is harmony, fragrance, sweetness, pleasantness to the touch, beauty, after his ineffable manner.

STILL thou art hidden, O Lord, from my soul in thy light and thy blessedness ; and therefore my soul still walks in its darkness and wretchedness. For it looks, and does not see thy beauty. It hearkens, and does not hear thy harmony. It smells, and does not perceive thy fragrance. It tastes, and does not recognise thy sweetness. It touches, and does not feel thy pleasantness. For thou hast these attributes in thyself, Lord God, after thine ineffable manner, who hast given them to objects created by thee, after their sensible manner ; but the sinful senses of my soul have grown rigid and dull, and have been obstructed by their long listlessness.

CHAPTER XVIII.

God is life, wisdom, eternity, and every true good.—Whatever is composed of parts is not wholly one ; it is capable, either in fact or in concept, of dissolution. In God wisdom, eternity, etc., are not parts, but one, and the very whole which God is, or unity itself, not even in concept divisible.

AND lo, again confusion ; lo, again grief and mourning meet him who seeks for joy and gladness. My

soul now hoped for satisfaction; and lo, again it is overwhelmed with need. I desired now to feast, and lo, I hunger more. I tried to rise to the light of God, and I have fallen back into my darkness. Nay, not only have I fallen into it, but I feel that I am enveloped in it. I fell before my mother conceived me. Truly, in darkness I was conceived, and in the cover of darkness I was born. Truly, in him we all fell, in whom we all sinned. In him we all lost, who kept easily, and wickedly lost to himself and to us that which when we wish to seek it, we do not know; when we seek it, we do not find; when we find, it is not that which we seek.

Do thou help me for thy goodness' sake! Lord, I sought thy face; thy face, Lord, will I seek; hide not thy face far from me (Psalms xxvii. 8). Free me from myself toward thee. Cleanse, heal, sharpen, enlighten the eye of my mind, that it may behold thee. Let my soul recover its strength, and with all its understanding let it strive toward thee, O Lord. What art thou, Lord, what art thou? What shall my heart conceive thee to be?

Assuredly thou art life, thou art wisdom, thou art truth, thou art goodness, thou art blessedness, thou art eternity, and thou art every true good. Many are these attributes: my straitened understanding cannot see so many at one view, that it may be gladdened by all at once. How, then, O Lord, art thou all these things? Are they parts of thee, or is each one of these rather the whole, which thou art? For, whatever is composed of parts is not altogether one, but is in some sort plural, and diverse from itself; and either in fact or in concept is capable of dissolution.

But these things are alien to thee, than whom

nothing better can be conceived of. Hence, there are no parts in thee, Lord, nor art thou more than one. But thou art so truly a unitary being, and so identical with thyself, that in no respect art thou unlike thyself; rather thou art unity itself, indivisible by any conception. Therefore, life and wisdom and the rest are not parts of thee, but all are one; and each of these is the whole, which thou art, and which all the rest are.

In this way, then, it appears that thou hast no parts, and that thy eternity, which thou art, is nowhere and never a part of thee or of thy eternity. But everywhere thou art as a whole, and thy eternity exists as a whole forever.

CHAPTER XIX.

He does not exist in place or time, but all things exist in him.

BUT if through thine eternity thou hast been, and art, and wilt be; and to have been is not to be destined to be; and to be is not to have been, or to be destined to be; how does thine eternity exist as a whole forever? Or is it true that nothing of thy eternity passes away, so that it is not now; and that nothing of it is destined to be, as if it were not yet?

Thou wast not, then, yesterday, nor wilt thou be to-morrow; but yesterday and to-day and to-morrow thou art; or, rather, neither yesterday nor to-day nor to-morrow thou art; but simply, thou art, outside all time. For yesterday and to-day and to-morrow have no existence, except in time; but thou, although nothing exists without thee, nevertheless dost not exist in space or time, but all things exist in thee. For nothing contains thee, but thou containest all.

CHAPTER XX.

He exists before all things and transcends all things, even the eternal things.—The eternity of God is present as a whole with him ; while other things have not yet that part of their eternity which is still to be, and have no longer that part which is past.

HENCE, thou dost permeate and embrace all things. Thou art before all, and dost transcend all. And, of a surety, thou art before all ; for before they were made, thou art. But how dost thou transcend all ? In what way dost thou transcend those beings which will have no end ? Is it because they cannot exist at all without thee ; while thou art in no wise less, if they should return to nothingness ? For so, in a certain sense, thou dost transcend them. Or, is it also because they can be conceived to have an end ; but thou by no means ? For so they actually have an end, in a certain sense ; but thou, in no sense. And certainly, what in no sense has an end transcends what is ended in any sense. Or, in this way also dost thou transcend all things, even the eternal, because thy eternity and theirs is present as a whole with thee ; while they have not yet that part of their eternity which is to come, just as they no longer have that part which is past ? For so thou dost ever transcend them, since thou art ever present with thyself, and since that to which they have not yet come is ever present with thee.

CHAPTER XXI.

Is this the age of the age, or ages of ages?—The eternity of God contains the ages of time themselves, and can be called the age of the age or ages of ages.

Is this, then, the age of the age, or ages of ages? For, as an age of time contains all temporal things, so thy eternity contains even the ages of time themselves. And these are indeed an age, because of their indivisible unity; but ages, because of their endless immeasurability. And, although thou art so great, O Lord, that all things are full of thee, and exist in thee; yet thou art so without all space, that neither midst, nor half, nor any part, is in thee.

CHAPTER XXII.

He alone is what he is and who he is.—All things need God for their being and their well-being.

THEREFORE, thou alone, O Lord, art what thou art; and thou art he who thou art. For, what is one thing in the whole and another in the parts, and in which there is any mutable element, is not altogether what it is. And what begins from non-existence, and can be conceived not to exist, and unless it subsists through something else, returns to non-existence; and what has a past existence, which is no longer, or a future existence, which is not yet,—this does not properly and absolutely exist.

But thou art what thou art, because, whatever thou art at any time, or in any way, thou art as a whole and forever. And thou art he who thou art, properly and simply; for thou hast neither a past ex-

istence nor a future, but only a present existence; nor canst thou be conceived as at any time non-existent. But thou art life, and light, and wisdom, and blessedness, and many goods of this nature. And yet thou art only one supreme good; thou art all-sufficient to thyself, and needest none; and thou art he whom all things need for their existence and well-being.

CHAPTER XXIII.

This good is equally Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. And this is a single, necessary Being, which is every good, and wholly good, and the only good.—Since the Word is true, and is truth itself, there is nothing in the Father, who utters it, which is not accomplished in the Word by which he expresses himself. Neither is the love which proceeds from Father and Son unequal to the Father or the Son, for Father and Son love themselves and one another in the same degree in which what they are is good. Of supreme simplicity nothing can be born, and from it nothing can proceed, except that which is this, of which it is born, or from which it proceeds.

THIS good thou art, thou, God the Father; this is thy Word, that is, thy Son. For nothing, other than what thou art, or greater or less than thou, can be in the Word by which thou dost express thyself; for thy Word is true, as thou art truthful. And hence it is truth itself, just as thou art; no other truth than thou; and thou art of so simple a nature, that of thee nothing can be born other than what thou art. This very good is the one love common to thee and to thy Son, that is, the Holy Spirit proceeding from both. For this love is not unequal to thee or to thy Son; seeing that thou dost love thyself and him, and he, thee and himself, to the whole extent of thy being and his. Nor is there aught else proceeding from

thee and from him, which is not unequal to thee and to him. Nor can anything proceed from the supreme simplicity, other than what this, from which it proceeds, is.

But what each is, separately, this is all the Trinity at once, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; seeing that each separately is none other than the supremely simple unity, and the supremely unitary simplicity. which can neither be multiplied nor varied. Moreover, there is a single necessary Being. Now, this is that single, necessary Being, in which is every good; nay, which is every good, and a single entire good, and the only good.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Conjecture as to the character and the magnitude of this good.—

If the created life is good, how good is the creative life!

AND now, my soul, arouse and lift up all thy understanding, and conceive, so far as thou canst, of what character and how great is that good. For, if individual goods are delectable, conceive in earnestness how delectable is that good which contains the pleasantness of all goods; and not such as we have experienced in created objects, but as different as the Creator from the creature. For, if the created life is good, how good is the creative life! If the salvation given is delightful, how delightful is the salvation which has given all salvation! If wisdom in the knowledge of the created world is lovely, how lovely is the wisdom which has created all things from nothing! Finally, if there are many great delights in delectable things, what and how great is the delight in him who has made these delectable things.

CHAPTER XXV.

What goods, and how great, belong to those who enjoy this good.

—Joy is multiplied in the blessed from the blessedness and joy of others.

Who shall enjoy this good? And what shall belong to him, and what shall not belong to him? At any rate, whatever he shall wish shall be his, and whatever he shall not wish shall not be his. For, these goods of body and soul will be such as eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither has the heart of man conceived (Isaiah lxiv. 4; 1 Corinthians ii. 9).

Why, then, dost thou wander abroad, slight man, in thy search for the goods of thy soul and thy body? Love the one good in which are all goods, and it sufficeth. Desire the simple good which is every good, and it is enough. For, what dost thou love, my flesh? What dost thou desire, my soul? There, there is whatever ye love, whatever ye desire.

If beauty delights thee, there shall the righteous shine forth as the sun (Matthew xiii. 43). If swiftness or endurance, or freedom of body, which naught can withstand, delight thee, they shall be as angels of God,—because it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body (1 Corinthians xv. 44)—in power certainly, though not in nature. If it is a long and sound life that pleases thee, there a healthful eternity is, and an eternal health. For the righteous shall live forever (Wisdom v. 15), and the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord (Psalms xxxvii. 39). If it is satisfaction of hunger, they shall be satisfied when the glory of the Lord hath appeared (Psalms xvii. 15). If it is quenching of thirst, they shall be abundantly

satisfied with the fatness of thy house (Psalms xxxvi. 8). If it is melody, there the choirs of angels sing forever, before God. If it is any not impure, but pure, pleasure, thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures, O God (Psalms xxxvi. 8).

If it is wisdom that delights thee, the very wisdom of God will reveal itself to them. If friendship, they shall love God more than themselves, and one another as themselves. And God shall love them more than they themselves; for they love him, and themselves, and one another, through him, and he, himself and them, through himself. If concord, they shall all have a single will.

If power, they shall have all power to fulfil their will, as God to fulfil his. For, as God will have power to do what he wills, through himself, so they will have power, through him, to do what they will. For, as they will not will aught else than he, he shall will whatever they will; and what he shall will cannot fail to be. If honor and riches, God shall make his good and faithful servants rulers over many things (Luke xii. 42); nay, they shall be called sons of God, and gods; and where his Son shall be, there they shall be also, heirs indeed of God, and joint-heirs with Christ (Romans viii. 17).

If true security delights thee, undoubtedly they shall be as sure that those goods, or rather that good, will never and in no wise fail them; as they shall be sure that they will not lose it of their own accord; and that God, who loves them, will not take it away from those who love him against their will; and that nothing more powerful than God will separate him from them against his will and theirs.

But what, or how great, is the joy, where such and

so great is the good! Heart of man, needy heart, heart acquainted with sorrows, nay, overwhelmed with sorrows, how greatly wouldst thou rejoice, if thou didst abound in all these things! Ask thy inmost mind whether it could contain its joy over so great a blessedness of its own.

Yet assuredly, if any other whom thou didst love altogether as thyself possessed the same blessedness, thy joy would be doubled, because thou wouldst rejoice not less for him than for thyself. But, if two, or three, or many more, had the same joy, thou wouldst rejoice as much for each one as for thyself, if thou didst love each as thyself. Hence, in that perfect love of innumerable blessed angels and sainted men, where none shall love another less than himself, every one shall rejoice for each of the others as for himself.

If, then, the heart of man will scarce contain his joy over his own so great good, how shall it contain so many and so great joys? And doubtless, seeing that every one loves another so far as he rejoices in the other's good, and as, in that perfect felicity, each one should love God beyond compare, more than himself and all the others with him; so he will rejoice beyond reckoning in the felicity of God, more than in his own and that of all the others with him.

But if they shall so love God with all their heart, and all their mind, and all their soul, that still all the heart, and all the mind, and all the soul shall not suffice for the worthiness of this love; doubtless they will so rejoice with all their heart, and all their mind, and all their soul, that all the heart, and all the mind, and all the soul shall not suffice for the fulness of their joy.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Is this joy which the Lord promises made full?—The blessed shall rejoice according as they shall love; and they shall love according as they shall know.

My God and my Lord, my hope and the joy of my heart, speak unto my soul and tell me whether this is the joy of which thou tellest us through thy Son: Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full (John xvi. 24). For I have found a joy that is full, and more than full. For when heart, and mind, and soul, and all the man, are full of that joy, joy beyond measure will still remain. Hence, not all of that joy shall enter into those who rejoice; but they who rejoice shall wholly enter into that joy.

Show me, O Lord, show thy servant in his heart whether this is the joy into which thy servants shall enter, who shall enter into the joy of their Lord. But that joy, surely, with which thy chosen ones shall rejoice, eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man (Isaiah lxiv. 4; 1 Corinthians ii. 9). Not yet, then, have I told or conceived, O Lord, how greatly those blessed ones of thine shall rejoice. Doubtless they shall rejoice according as they shall love; and they shall love according as they shall know. How far they will know thee, Lord, then! and how much they will love thee! Truly, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man in this life, how far they shall know thee, and how much they shall love thee in that life.

I pray, O God, to know thee, to love thee, that I may rejoice in thee. And if I cannot attain to full joy

in this life, may I at least advance from day to day, until that joy shall come to the full. Let the knowledge of thee advance in me here, and there be made full. Let the love of thee increase, and there let it be full, that here my joy may be great in hope, and there full in truth. Lord, through thy Son thou dost command, nay, thou dost counsel us to ask; and thou dost promise that we shall receive, that our joy may be full. I ask, O Lord, as thou dost counsel through our wonderful Counsellor. I will receive what thou dost promise by virtue of thy truth, that my joy may be full. Faithful God, I ask. I will receive, that my joy may be full. Meanwhile, let my mind meditate upon it; let my tongue speak of it. Let my heart love it; let my mouth talk of it. Let my soul hunger for it; let my flesh thirst for it; let my whole being desire it, until I enter into thy joy, O Lord, who art the Three and the One God, blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

ANSELM'S MONOLOGIUM

ON THE BEING OF GOD.

PREFACE.

In this book Anselm discusses, under the form of a meditation, the Being of God, basing his argument not on the authority of Scripture, but on the force of reason. It contains nothing that is inconsistent with the writings of the Holy Fathers, and especially nothing that is inconsistent with those of St. Augustine.—The Greek terminology is employed in Chapter LXXVIII., where it is stated that the Trinity may be said to consist of three substances, that is, three persons.

CERTAIN brethren have often and earnestly entreated me to put in writing some thoughts that I had offered them in familiar conversation, regarding meditation on the Being of God, and on some other topics connected with this subject, under the form of a meditation on these themes. It is in accordance with their wish, rather than with my ability, that they have prescribed such a form for the writing of this meditation; in order that nothing in Scripture should be urged on the authority of Scripture itself, but that whatever the conclusion of independent investigation should declare to be true, should, in an unadorned style, with common proofs and with a simple argument, be briefly enforced by the cogency of reason, and plainly expounded in the light of truth. It was

their wish also, that I should not disdain to meet such simple and almost foolish objections as occur to me.

This task I have long refused to undertake. And, reflecting on the matter, I have tried on many grounds to excuse myself; for the more they wanted this work to be adaptable to practical use, the more was what they enjoined on me difficult of execution. Overcome at last, however, both by the modest importunity of their entreaties and by the not contemptible sincerity of their zeal; and reluctant as I was because of the difficulty of my task and the weakness of my talent, I entered upon the work they asked for. But it is with pleasure inspired by their affection that, so far as I was able, I have prosecuted this work within the limits they set.

I was led to this undertaking in the hope that whatever I might accomplish would soon be overwhelmed with contempt, as by men disgusted with some worthless thing. For I know that in this book I have not so much satisfied those who entreated me, as put an end to the entreaties that followed me so urgently. Yet, somehow it fell out, contrary to my hope, that not only the brethren mentioned above, but several others, by making copies for their own use, condemned this writing to long remembrance. And, after frequent consideration, I have not been able to find that I have made in it any statement which is inconsistent with the writings of the Catholic Fathers, or especially with those of St. Augustine. Wherefore, if it shall appear to any man that I have offered in this work any thought that is either too novel or discordant with the truth, I ask him not to denounce me at once as one who boldly seizes upon new ideas, or as a maintainer of falsehood; but let

him first read diligently Augustine's books on the Trinity, and then judge my treatise in the light of those.

In stating that the supreme Trinity may be said to consist of three substances, I have followed the Greeks, who acknowledge three substances in one Essence, in the same faith wherein we acknowledge three persons in one Substance. For they designate by the word *substance* that attribute of God which we designate by the word *person*.

Whatever I have said on that point, however, is put in the mouth of one debating and investigating in solitary reflection, questions to which he had given no attention before. And this method I knew to be in accordance with the wish of those whose request I was striving to fulfil. But it is my prayer and earnest entreaty, that if any shall wish to copy this work, he shall be careful to place this preface at the beginning of the book, before the body of the meditation itself. For I believe that one will be much helped in understanding the matter of this book, if he has taken note of the intention, and the method according to which it is discussed. It is my opinion, too, that one who has first seen this preface will not pronounce a rash judgment, if he shall find offered here any thought that is contrary to his own belief.

CHAPTER I.

There is a being which is best, and greatest, and highest of all existing beings.

If any man, either from ignorance or unbelief, has no knowledge of the existence of one Nature which is the highest of all existing beings, which is also suffi-

cient to itself in its eternal blessedness, and which confers upon and effects in all other beings, through its omnipotent goodness, the very fact of their existence, and the fact that in any way their existence is good; and if he has no knowledge of many other things, which we necessarily believe regarding God and his creatures, he still believes that he can at least convince himself of these truths in great part, even if his mental powers are very ordinary, by the force of reason alone.

And, although he could do this in many ways, I shall adopt one which I consider easiest for such a man. For, since all desire to enjoy only those things which they suppose to be good, it is natural that this man should, at some time, turn his mind's eye to the examination of that cause by which these things are good, which he does not desire, except as he judges them to be good. So that, as reason leads the way and follows up these considerations, he advances rationally to those truths of which, without reason, he has no knowledge. And if, in this discussion, I use any argument which no greater authority adduces, I wish it to be received in this way: although, on the grounds that I shall see fit to adopt, the conclusion is reached as if necessarily, yet it is not, for this reason, said to be absolutely necessary, but merely that it can appear so for the time being.

It is easy, then, for one to say to himself: Since there are goods so innumerable, whose great diversity we experience by the bodily senses, and discern by our mental faculties, must we not believe that there is some one thing, through which all goods whatever are good? Or are they good, one through one thing, and another through another? To be sure, it is most

certain and clear, for all who are willing to see, that whatsoever things are said to possess any attribute in such a way that in mutual comparison they may be said to possess it in greater, or less, or equal degree, are said to possess it by virtue of some fact, which is not understood to be one thing in one case and another in another, but to be the same in different cases, whether it is regarded as existing in these cases in equal or unequal degree. For, whatsoever things are said to be *just*, when compared one with another, whether equally, or more, or less, cannot be understood as just, except through the quality of *justness*, which is not one thing in one instance, and another in another.

Since it is certain, then, that all goods, if mutually compared, would prove either equally or unequally good, necessarily they are all good by virtue of something which is conceived of as the same in different goods, although sometimes they seem to be called good, the one by virtue of one thing, the other by virtue of another. For, apparently it is by virtue of one quality, that a horse is called *good*, because he is strong, and by virtue of another, that he is called *good*, because he is swift. For, though he seems to be called good by virtue of his strength, and good by virtue of his swiftness, yet swiftness and strength do not appear to be the same thing.

But if a horse, because he is strong and swift, is therefore good, how is it that a strong, swift robber is bad? Rather, then, just as a strong, swift robber is bad, because he is harmful, so a strong, swift horse is good, because he is useful. And, indeed, nothing is ordinarily regarded as good, except either for some utility—as, for instance, safety is called good, and

those things which promote safety—or for some honorable character—as, for instance, beauty is reckoned to be good, and what promotes beauty.

But, since the reasoning which we have observed is in no wise refutable, necessarily, again, all things, whether useful or honorable, if they are truly good, are good through that same being through which all goods exist, whatever that being is. But who can doubt this very being, through which all goods exist, to be a great good? This must be, then, a good through itself, since every other good is through it.

It follows, therefore, that all other goods are good through another being than that which they themselves are, and this being alone is good through itself. Hence, this alone is supremely good, which is alone good through itself. For it is supreme, in that it so surpasses other beings, that it is neither equalled nor excelled. But that which is supremely good is also supremely great. There is, therefore, some one being which is supremely good, and supremely great, that is, the highest of all existing beings.

CHAPTER II.

The same subject continued.

BUT, just as it has been proved that there is a being that is supremely good, since all goods are good through a single being, which is good through itself; so it is necessarily inferred that there is something supremely great, which is great through itself. But I do not mean physically great, as a material object is great, but that which, the greater it is, is the better or the more worthy,—wisdom, for instance. And

since there can be nothing supremely great except what is supremely good, there must be a being that is greatest and best, i. e., the highest of all existing beings.

CHAPTER III.

There is a certain Nature through which whatever is exists, and which exists through itself, and is the highest of all existing beings.

THEREFORE, not only are all good things such through something that is one and the same, and all great things such through something that is one and the same; but whatever is, apparently exists through something that is one and the same. For, everything that is, exists either through something, or through nothing. But nothing exists through nothing. For it is altogether inconceivable that anything should not exist by virtue of something.

Whatever is, then, does not exist except through something. Since this is true, either there is one being, or there are more than one, through which all things that are exist. But if there are more than one, either these are themselves to be referred to some one being, through which they exist, or they exist separately, each through itself, or they exist mutually through one another.

But, if these beings exist through one being, then all things do not exist through more than one, but rather through that one being through which these exist.

If, however, these exist separately, each through itself, there is, at any rate, some power or property of existing through self (*existendi per se*), by which

they are able to exist each through itself. But, there can be no doubt that, in that case, they exist through this very power, which is one, and through which they are able to exist, each through itself. More truly, then, do all things exist through this very being, which is one, than through these, which are more than one, which, without this one, cannot exist.

But that these beings exist mutually through one another, no reason can admit; since it is an irrational conception that anything should exist through a being on which it confers existence. For not even beings of a relative nature exist thus mutually, the one through the other. For, though the terms *master* and *servant* are used with mutual reference, and the men thus designated are mentioned as having mutual relations, yet they do not at all exist mutually, the one through the other, since these relations exist through the subjects to which they are referred.

Therefore, since truth altogether excludes the supposition that there are more beings than one, through which all things exist, that being, through which all exist, must be one. Since, then, all things that are exist through this one being, doubtless this one being exists through itself. Whatever things there are else, then, exist through something other than themselves, and this alone through itself. But whatever exists through another is less than that, through which all things are, and which alone exists through itself. Therefore, that which exists through itself exists in the greatest degree of all things.

There is, then, some one being which alone exists in the greatest and the highest degree of all. But that which is greatest of all, and through which exists whatever is good or great, and, in short, whatever

has any existence—that must be supremely good, and supremely great, and the highest of all existing beings.

CHAPTER IV.

The same subject continued.

FURTHERMORE, if one observes the nature of things he perceives, whether he will or no, that not all are embraced in a single degree of dignity; but that certain among them are distinguished by inequality of degree. For, he who doubts that the horse is superior in its nature to wood, and man more excellent than the horse, assuredly does not deserve the name of man. Therefore, although it cannot be denied that some natures are superior to others, nevertheless reason convinces us that some nature is so preëminent among these, that it has no superior. For, if the distinction of degrees is infinite, so that there is among them no degree, than which no higher can be found, our course of reasoning reaches this conclusion: that the multitude of natures themselves is not limited by any bounds. But only an absurdly foolish man can fail to regard such a conclusion as absurdly foolish. There is, then, necessarily some nature which is so superior to some nature or natures, that there is none in comparison with which it is ranked as inferior.

Now, this nature which is such, either is single, or there are more natures than one of this sort, and they are of equal degree.

But, if they are more than one and equal, since they cannot be equal through any diverse causes, but only through some cause which is one and the same, that one cause, through which they are equally so

great, either is itself what they are, that is, the very essence of these natures; or else it is another than what they are.

But if it is nothing else than their very essence itself, just as they have not more than one essence, but a single essence, so they have not more than one nature, but a single nature. For I here understand *nature* as identical with *essence*.

If, however, that through which these natures are so great is another than that which they are, then, certainly, they are less than that through which they are so great. For, whatever is great through something else is less than that through which it is great. Therefore, they are not so great that there is nothing else greater than they.

But if, neither through what they are nor through anything other than themselves, can there be more such natures than one, than which nothing else shall be more excellent, then in no wise can there be more than one nature of this kind. We conclude, then, that there is some nature which **is** one and single, and which is so superior to others that it **is** inferior to none. But that which is such is the greatest and best of all existing beings. Hence, there is a certain nature which is the highest of all existing beings. This, however, it cannot be, unless it is what it is through itself, and all existing beings are what they are through it.

For since, as our reasoning showed us not long since, that which exists through itself, and through which all other things exist, is the highest of all existing beings; either conversely, that which is the highest exists through itself, and all others through it; or, there will be more than one supreme being. But it

is manifest that there cannot be more than one supreme being. There is, therefore, a certain Nature, or Substance, or Essence, which is through itself good and great, and through itself is what it is; and through which exists whatever is truly good, or great, or has any existence at all; and which is the supreme good being, the supreme great being, being or subsisting as supreme, that is, the highest of all existing beings.

CHAPTER V.

Just as this Nature exists through itself, and other beings through it, so it derives existence from itself, and other beings from it.

Seeing, then, that the truth already discovered has been satisfactorily demonstrated, it is profitable to examine whether this Nature, and all things that have any existence, derive existence from no other source than it, just as they do not exist except through it.

But it is clear that one may say, that what derives existence from something exists through the same thing; and what exists through something also derives existence from it. For instance, what derives existence from matter, and exists through the artificer, may also be said to exist through matter, and to derive existence from the artificer, since it exists through both, and derives existence from both. That is, it is endowed with existence by both, although it exists through matter and from the artificer in another sense than that in which it exists through, and from, the artificer.

It follows, then, that just as all existing beings are what they are, through the supreme Nature, and as that Nature exists through itself, but other beings through another than themselves, so all existing be-

ings derive existence from this supreme Nature. And therefore, this Nature derives existence from itself, but other beings from it.

CHAPTER VI.

This Nature was not brought into existence with the help of any external cause, yet it does not exist through nothing, or derive existence from nothing.—How existence through self, and derived from self, is conceivable.

SINCE the same meaning is not always attached to the phrase, “existence through” something, or, to the phrase, “existence derived from” something, very diligent inquiry must be made, in what way all existing beings exist through the supreme Nature, or derive existence from it. For, what exists through itself, and what exists through another, do not admit the same ground of existence. Let us first consider, separately, this supreme Nature, which exists through self; then these beings which exist through another.

Since it is evident, then, that this Nature is whatever it is, through itself, and all other beings are what they are, through it, how does it exist through itself? For, what is said to exist through anything apparently exists through an efficient agent, or through matter, or through some other external aid, as through some instrument. But, whatever exists in any of these three ways exists through another than itself, and it is of later existence, and, in some sort, less than that through which it obtains existence.

But, in no wise does the supreme Nature exist through another, nor is it later or less than itself or anything else. Therefore, the supreme Nature could be created neither by itself, nor by another; nor could

itself or any other be the matter whence it should be created; nor did it assist itself in any way; nor did anything assist it to be what it was not before.

What is to be inferred? For that which cannot have come into existence by any creative agent, or from any matter, or with any external aids, seems either to be nothing, or, if it has any existence, to exist through nothing, and derive existence from nothing. And although, in accordance with the observations I have already made, in the light of reason, regarding the supreme Substance, I should think such propositions could in no wise be true in the case of the supreme Substance; yet, I would not neglect to give a connected demonstration of this matter.

For, seeing that this my meditation has suddenly brought me to an important and interesting point, I am unwilling to pass over carelessly even any simple or almost foolish objection that occurs to me, in my argument; in order that by leaving no ambiguity in my discussion up to this point, I may have the better assured strength to advance toward what follows; and in order that if, perchance, I shall wish to convince any one of the truth of my speculations, even one of the slower minds, through the removal of every obstacle, however slight, may acquiesce in what it finds here.

That this Nature, then, without which no nature exists, is nothing, is as false as it would be absurd to say that whatever is is nothing. And, moreover, it does not exist through nothing, because it is utterly inconceivable that what is something should exist through nothing. But, if in any way it derives existence from nothing, it does so through itself, or through another, or through nothing. But it is evident that

in no wise does anything exist through nothing. If, then, in any way it derives existence from nothing, it does so either through itself or through another.

But nothing can, through itself, derive existence from nothing, because if anything derives existence from nothing, through something, then that through which it exists must exist before it. Seeing that this Being, then, does not exist before itself, by no means does it derive existence from itself.

But if it is supposed to have derived existence from some other nature, then it is not the supreme Nature, but some inferior one, nor is it what it is through itself, but through another.

Again : if this Nature derives existence from nothing, through something, that through which it exists was a great good, since it was the cause of good. But no good can be understood as existing before that good, without which nothing is good ; and it is sufficiently clear that this good, without which there is no good, is the supreme Nature which is under discussion. Therefore, it is not even conceivable that this Nature was preceded by any being, through which it derived existence from nothing.

Hence, if it has any existence through nothing, or derives existence from nothing, there is no doubt that either, whatever it is, it does not exist through itself, or derive existence from itself, or else it is itself nothing. It is unnecessary to show that both these suppositions are false. The supreme Substance, then, does not exist through any efficient agent, and does not derive existence from any matter, and was not aided in being brought into existence by any external causes. Nevertheless, it by no means exists through

nothing, or derives existence from nothing; since, through itself and from itself, it is whatever it is.

Finally, as to how it should be understood to exist through itself, and to derive existence from itself: it did not create itself, nor did it spring up as its own matter, nor did it in any way assist itself to become what it was not before, unless, haply, it seems best to conceive of this subject in the way in which one says that *the light lights* or is *lucent*, through and from itself. For, as are the mutual relations of *the light* and *to light* and *lucent* (*lux, lucere, lucens*), such are the relations of *essence*, and *to be* and *being*, that is, *existing* or *subsisting*. So the supreme *Being*, and *to be* in the highest degree, and *being* in the highest degree, bear much the same relations, one to another, as *the light* and *to light* and *lucent*.

CHAPTER VII.

In what way all other beings exist through this Nature and derive existence from it.

THERE now remains the discussion of that whole class of beings that exist through another, as to how they exist through the supreme Substance, whether because this Substance created them all, or because it was the material of all. For, there is no need to inquire whether all exist through it, for this reason, namely, that there being another creative agent, or another existing material, this supreme Substance has merely aided in bringing about the existence of all things: since it is inconsistent with what has already been shown, that whatever things are should exist secondarily, and not primarily, through it.

First, then, it seems to me, we ought to inquire

whether that whole class of beings which exist through another derive existence from any material. But I do not doubt that all this solid world, with its parts, just as we see, consists of earth, water, fire, and air. These four elements, of course, can be conceived of without these forms which we see in actual objects, so that their formless, or even confused, nature appears to be the material of all bodies, distinguished by their own forms.—I say that I do not doubt this. But I ask, whence this very material that I have mentioned, the material of the mundane mass, derives its existence. For, if there is some material of this material, then that is more truly the material of the physical universe.

If, then, the universe of things, whether visible or invisible, derives existence from any material, certainly it not only cannot be, but it cannot even be supposed to be, from any other material than from the supreme Nature or from itself, or from some third being—but this last, at any rate, does not exist. For, indeed, nothing is even conceivable except that highest of all beings, which exists through itself, and the universe of beings which exist, not through themselves, but through this supreme Being. Hence, that which has no existence at all is not the material of anything.

From its own nature the universe cannot derive existence, since, if this were the case, it would in some sort exist through itself and so through another than that through which all things exist. But all these suppositions are false.

Again, everything that derives existence from material derives existence from another, and exists later than that other. Therefore, since nothing is other

than itself, or later than itself, it follows that nothing derives material existence from itself.

But if, from the material of the supreme Nature itself, any lesser being can derive existence, the supreme good is subject to change and corruption. But this it is impious to suppose. Hence, since everything that is other than this supreme Nature is less than it, it is impossible that anything other than it in this way derives existence from it.

Furthermore: doubtless that is in no wise good, through which the supreme good is subjected to change or corruption. But, if any lesser nature derives existence from the material of the supreme good, inasmuch as nothing exists whencesoever, except through the supreme Being, the supreme good is subjected to change and corruption through the supreme Being itself. Hence, the supreme Being, which is itself the supreme good, is by no means good; which is a contradiction. There is, therefore, no lesser nature which derives existence in a material way from the supreme Nature.

Since, then, it is evident that the essence of those things which exist through another does not derive existence as if materially, from the supreme Essence, nor from itself, nor from another, it is manifest that it derives existence from no material. Hence, seeing that whatever is exists through the supreme Being, nor can aught else exist through this Being, except by its creation, or by its existence as material, it follows, necessarily, that nothing besides it exists, except by its creation. And, since nothing else is or has been, except that supreme Being and the beings created by it, it could create nothing at all through any other instrument or aid than itself. But all that

it has created, it has doubtless created either from something, as from material, or from nothing.

Since, then, it is most patent that the essence of all beings, except the supreme Essence, was created by that supreme Essence, and derives existence from no material, doubtless nothing can be more clear than that this supreme Essence nevertheless produced from nothing, alone and through itself, the world of material things, so numerous a multitude, formed in such beauty, varied in such order, so fitly diversified.

CHAPTER VIII.

How it is to be understood that this Nature created all things from nothing.

BUT we are confronted with a doubt regarding this term *nothing*. For, from whatever source anything is created, that source is the cause of what is created from it, and, necessarily, every cause affords some assistance to the being of what it effects. This is so firmly believed, as a result of experience, by every one, that the belief can be wrested from no one by argument, and can scarcely be purloined by sophistry.

Accordingly, if anything was created from nothing, this very nothing was the cause of what was created from it. But how could that which had no existence assist anything in coming into existence? If, however, no aid to the existence of anything ever had its source in nothing, who can be convinced, and how, that anything is created out of nothing?

Moreover, nothing either means something, or does not mean something. But if nothing is something, whatever has been created from nothing has been created from something. If, however, nothing is not

something; since it is inconceivable that anything should be created from what does not exist, nothing is created from nothing; just as all agree that nothing comes from nothing. Whence, it evidently follows, that whatever is created is created from something; for it is created either from something or from nothing. Whether, then, nothing is something, or nothing is not something, it apparently follows, that whatever has been created was created from something.

But, if this is posited as a truth, then it is so posited in opposition to the whole argument propounded in the preceding chapter. Hence, since what was nothing will thus be something, that which was something in the highest degree will be nothing. For, from the discovery of a certain Substance existing in the greatest degree of all existing beings, my reasoning had brought me to this conclusion, that all other beings were so created by this Substance, that that from which they were created was nothing. Hence, if that from which they were created, which I supposed to be nothing, is something, whatever I supposed to have been ascertained regarding the supreme Being, is nothing.

What, then, is to be our understanding of the term *nothing*?—For I have already determined not to neglect in this meditation any possible objection, even if it be almost foolish.—In three ways, then—and this suffices for the removal of the present obstacle—can the statement that any substance was created from nothing be explained.

There is one way, according to which we wish it to be understood, that what is said to have been created from nothing has not been created at all; just

as, to one who asks regarding a dumb man, of what he speaks, the answer is given, "of nothing," that is, he does not speak at all. According to this interpretation, to one who enquires regarding the supreme Being, or regarding what never has existed and does not exist at all, as to whence it was created, the answer, "from nothing" may properly be given; that is, it never was created. But this answer is unintelligible in the case of any of those things that actually were created.

There is another interpretation which is, indeed, capable of supposition, but cannot be true; namely, that if anything is said to have been created from nothing, it was created from nothing itself (*de nihilo ipso*), that is, from what does not exist at all, as if this very nothing were some existent being, from which something could be created. But, since this is always false, as often as it is assumed an irreconcilable contradiction follows.

There is a third interpretation, according to which a thing is said to have been created from nothing, when we understand that it was indeed created, but that there is not anything whence it was created. Apparently it is said with a like meaning, when a man is afflicted without cause, that he is afflicted "over nothing."

If, then, the conclusion reached in the preceding chapter is understood in this sense, that with the exception of the supreme Being all things have been created by that Being from nothing, that is, not from anything; just as this conclusion consistently follows the preceding arguments, so, from it, nothing inconsistent is inferred; although it may be said, without inconsistency or any contradiction, that what has been

created by the creative Substance was created from nothing, in the way that one frequently says a rich man has been made from a poor man, or that one has recovered health from sickness; that is, he who was poor before, is rich now, as he was not before; and he who was ill before, is well now, as he was not before.

In this way, then, we can understand, without inconsistency, the statement that the creative Being created all things from nothing, or that all were created through it from nothing; that is, those things which before were nothing, are now something. For, indeed, from the very word that we use, saying that it *created* them or that they were *created*, we understand that when this Being created them, it created something, and that when they were created, they were created only as something. For so, beholding a man of very lowly fortunes exalted with many riches and honors by some one, we say, "Lo, he has made that man out of nothing"; that is, the man who was before reputed as nothing is now, by virtue of that other's making, truly reckoned as something.

CHAPTER IX.

Those things which were created from nothing had an existence before their creation in the thought of the Creator.

BUT I seem to see a truth that compels me to distinguish carefully in what sense those things which were created may be said to have been nothing before their creation. For, in no wise can anything conceivably be created by any, unless there is, in the mind of the creative agent, some example, as it were, or (as is more fittingly supposed) some model, or like-

ness, or rule. It is evident, then, that before the world was created, it was in the thought of the supreme Nature, what, and of what sort, and how, it should be. Hence, although it is clear that the beings that were created were nothing before their creation, to this extent, that they were not what they now are, nor was there anything whence they should be created, yet they were not nothing, so far as the creator's thought is concerned, through which, and according to which, they were created.

CHAPTER X.

This thought is a kind of expression of the objects created (*locutio rerum*), like the expression which an artisan forms in his mind for what he intends to make.

BUT this model of things, which preceded their creation in the thought of the creator, what else is it than a kind of expression of these things in his thought itself; just as when an artisan is about to make something after the manner of his craft, he first expresses it to himself through a concept? But by the *expression* of the mind or reason I mean, here, not the conception of words signifying the objects, but the general view in the mind, by the vision of conception, of the objects themselves, whether destined to be, or already existing.

For, from frequent usage, it is recognised that we can express the same object in three ways. For we express objects either by the sensible use of sensible signs, that is, signs which are perceptible to the bodily senses; or by thinking within ourselves insensibly of these signs which, when outwardly used, are sensible; or not by employing these signs, either sensibly or

insensibly, but by expressing the things themselves inwardly in our mind, whether by the power of imagining material bodies or of understanding thought, according to the diversity of these objects themselves.

For I express *a man* in one way, when I signify him by pronouncing these words, *a man*; in another, when I think of the same words in silence; and in another, when the mind regards the man himself, either through the image of his body, or through the reason; through the image of his body, when the mind imagines his visible form; through the reason, however, when it thinks of his universal essence, which is a rational, mortal animal.

Now, the first two kinds of expression are in the language of one's race. But the words of that kind of expression, which I have put third and last, when they concern objects well known, are natural, and are the same among all nations. And, since all other words owe their invention to these, where these are, no other word is necessary for the recognition of an object, and where they cannot be, no other word is of any use for the description of an object.

For, without absurdity, they may also be said to be the truer, the more like they are to the objects to which they correspond, and the more expressively they signify these objects. For, with the exception of those objects, which we employ as their own names, in order to signify them, like certain sounds, the vowel *a* for instance—with the exception of these, I say, no other word appears so similar to the object to which it is applied, or expresses it as does that likeness which is expressed by the vision of the mind thinking of the object itself.

This last, then, should be called the especially

proper and primary *word*, corresponding to the thing. Hence, if no expression of any object whatever so nearly approaches the object as that expression which consists of this sort of *words*, nor can there be in the thought of any another word so like the object, whether destined to be, or already existing, not without reason it may be thought that such an expression of objects existed with (*apud*) the supreme Substance before their creation, that they might be created; and exists, now that they have been created, that they may be known through it.

CHAPTER XI.

The analogy, however, between the expression of the Creator and the expression of the artisan is very incomplete.

BUT, though it is most certain that the supreme Substance expressed, as it were, within itself the whole created world, which it established according to, and through, this same most profound expression, just as an artisan first conceives in his mind what he afterwards actually executes in accordance with his mental concept, yet I see that this analogy is very incomplete.

For the supreme Substance took absolutely nothing from any other source, whence it might either frame a model in itself, or make its creatures what they are; while the artisan is wholly unable to conceive in his imagination any bodily thing, except what he has in some way learned from external objects, whether all at once, or part by part; nor can he perform the work mentally conceived, if there is a lack of material, or of anything without which a work premeditated cannot be performed. For, though a man

can, by meditation or representation, frame the idea of some sort of animal, such as has no existence; yet, by no means has he the power to do this, except by uniting in this idea the parts that he has gathered in his memory from objects known externally.

Hence, in this respect, these inner expressions of the works they are to create differ in the creative substance and in the artisan: that the former expression, without being taken or aided from any external source, but as first and sole cause, could suffice the Artificer for the performance of his work, while the latter is neither first, nor sole, nor sufficient, cause for the inception of the artisan's work. Therefore, whatever has been created through the former expression is only what it is through that expression, while whatever has been created through the latter would not exist at all, unless it were something that it is not through this expression itself.

CHAPTER XII.

This expression of the supreme Being is the supreme Being.

BUT since, as our reasoning shows, it is equally certain that whatever the supreme Substance created, it created through nothing other than itself; and whatever it created, it created through its own most intimate expression, whether separately, by the utterance of separate words, or all at once, by the utterance of one word; what conclusion can be more evidently necessary, than that this expression of the supreme Being is no other than the supreme Being? Therefore, the consideration of this expression should not, in my opinion, be carelessly passed over. But before it can be discussed, I think some of the properties

of this supreme Substance should be diligently and earnestly investigated.

CHAPTER XIII.

As all things were created through the supreme Being, so all live through it.

It is certain, then, that through the supreme Nature whatever is not identical with it has been created. But no rational mind can doubt that all creatures live and continue to exist, so long as they do exist, by the sustenance afforded by that very Being through whose creative act they are endowed with the existence that they have. For, by a like course of reasoning to that by which it has been gathered that all existing beings exist through some one being, hence that being alone exists through itself, and others through another than themselves—by a like course of reasoning, I say, it can be proved that whatever things live, live through some one being ; hence that being alone lives through itself, and others through another than themselves.

But, since it cannot but be that those things which have been created live through another, and that by which they have been created lives through itself, necessarily, just as nothing has been created except through the creative, present Being, so nothing lives except through its preserving presence.

CHAPTER XIV.

This Being is in all things, and throughout all ; and all derive existence from it and exist through and in it.

BUT if this is true—rather, since this must be true, it follows that, where this Being is not, nothing is. It is, then, everywhere, and throughout all things, and

in all. But seeing that it is manifestly absurd that as any created being can in no wise exceed the immeasurableness of what creates and cherishes it, so the creative and cherishing Being cannot, in any way, exceed the sum of the things it has created; it is clear that this Being itself, is what supports and surpasses, includes and permeates all other things. If we unite this truth with the truths already discovered, we find it is this same Being which is in all and through all, and from which, and through which, and in which, all exist.

CHAPTER XV.

What can or cannot be stated concerning the substance of this Being.

NOT without reason I am now strongly impelled to inquire as earnestly as I am able, which of all the statements that may be made regarding anything is substantially applicable to this so wonderful Nature. For, though I should be surprised if, among the names or words by which we designate things created from nothing, any should be found that could worthily be applied to the Substance which is the creator of all; yet, we must try and see to what end reason will lead this investigation.

As to relative expressions, at any rate, no one can doubt that no such expression describes what is essential to that in regard to which it is relatively employed. Hence, if any relative predication is made regarding the supreme Nature, it is not significant of its substance.

Therefore, it is manifest that this very expression, that this Nature, is the *highest* of all beings, or *greater* than those which have been created by it; or any

other relative term that can, in like manner, be applied to it, does not describe its natural essence.

For, if none of those things ever existed, in relation to which it is called *supreme* or *greater*, it would not be conceived as either *supreme* or *greater*, yet it would not, therefore, be less good, or suffer detriment to its essential greatness in any degree. And this truth is clearly seen from the fact that this Nature exists through no other than itself, whatever there be that is good or great. If, then, the supreme Nature can be so conceived of as not supreme, that still it shall be in no wise greater or less than when it is conceived of as the highest of all beings, it is manifest that the term *supreme*, taken by itself, does not describe that Being which is altogether greater and better than whatever is not what it is. But, what these considerations show regarding the term *supreme* or *highest* is found to be true, in like manner, of other similar, relative expressions.

Passing over these relative predications, then, since none of them taken by itself represents the essence of anything, let our attention be turned to the discussion of other kinds of predication.

Now, certainly if one diligently considers separately whatever there is that is not of a relative nature, either it is such that, *to be it* is in general better than *not to be it*, or such that, in some cases, *not to be it* is better than *to be it*. But I here understand the phrases, *to be it* and *not to be it*, in the same way in which I understand *to be true* and *not to be true*, *to be bodily* and *not to be bodily*, and the like. Indeed, *to be* anything is, in general, better than *not to be it*; as *to be wise* is better than *not to be so*; that is, it is better to be wise than not to be wise. For, though one who

is just, but not wise, is apparently a better man than one who is wise, but not just, yet, taken by itself, it is not better *not to be wise* than *to be wise*. For, everything that is not wise, simply in so far as it is not wise, is less than what is wise, since everything that is not wise would be better if it were wise. In the same way, *to be true* is altogether better than *not to be so*, that is, better than *not to be true*; and *just* is better than *not just*; and *to live* than *not to live*.

But, in some cases, *not to be* a certain thing is better than *to be it*, as *not to be gold* may be better than *to be gold*. For it is better for man not to be gold, than to be gold; although it might be better for something to be gold, than not to be gold—lead, for instance. For though both, namely, man and lead are not gold, man is something as much better than gold, as he would be of inferior nature, were he gold; while lead is something as much more base than gold, as it would be more precious, were it gold.

But, from the fact that the supreme Nature may be so conceived of as not supreme, that *supreme* is neither in general better than *not supreme*, nor *not supreme* better, in any case, than *supreme*—from this fact it is evident that there are many relative expressions which are by no means included in this classification. Whether, however, any are so included, I refrain from inquiring; since it is sufficient, for my purpose, that undoubtedly none of these, taken by itself, describes the substance of the supreme Nature.

Since, then, it is true of whatever else there is, that, if it is taken independently, *to be it* is better than *not to be it*; as it is impious to suppose that the substance of the supreme Nature is anything, than which what is not it is in any way better, it must be true that

this substance is whatever is, in general, better than what is not it. For, it alone is that, than which there is nothing better at all, and which is better than all things, which are not what it is.

It is not a material body, then, or any of those things which the bodily senses discern. For, than all these there is something better, which is not what they themselves are. For, the rational mind, as to which no bodily sense can perceive what, or of what character, or how great, it is—the less this rational mind would be if it were any of those things that are in the scope of the bodily senses, the greater it is than any of these. For by no means should this supreme Being be said to be any of those things to which something, which they themselves are not, is superior; and it should by all means, as our reasoning shows, be said to be any of those things to which everything, which is not what they themselves are, is inferior.

Hence, this Being must be living, wise, powerful, and all-powerful, true, just, blessed, eternal, and whatever, in like manner, is absolutely better than what is not it. Why, then, should we make any further inquiry as to what that supreme Nature is, if it is manifest which of all things it is, and which it is not?

CHAPTER XVI.

For this Being it is the same to be just that it is to be justice; and so with regard to attributes that can be expressed in the same way: and none of these shows of what character, or how great, but what this Being is.

BUT perhaps, when this Being is called just, or great, or anything like these, it is not shown what it is, but of what character, or how great it is. For

every such term seems to be used with reference to quantity or magnitude; because everything that is just is so through justness, and so with other like cases, in the same way. Hence, the supreme Nature itself is not just, except through justness.

It seems, then, that by *participation* in this quality, that is, justness, the supremely good Substance is called just. But, if this is so, it is just through another, and not through itself. But this is contrary to the truth already established, that it is good, or great, or whatever it is at all, through itself and not through another. So, if it is not just, except through justness, and cannot be just, except through itself, what can be more clear than that this Nature is itself justness? And, when it is said to be just through justness, it is the same as saying that it is just through itself. And, when it is said to be just through itself, nothing else is understood than that it is just through justness. Hence, if it is inquired what the supreme Nature, which is in question, is in itself, what truer answer can be given, than *Justness*?

We must observe, then, how we are to understand the statement, that the Nature which is itself justness is just. For, since a man cannot be justness, but can possess justness, we do not conceive of a just man as *being* justness, but as possessing justness. Since, on the other hand, it cannot properly be said of the supreme Nature that it possesses justness, but that it is justness, when it is called just it is properly conceived of as being justness, but not as possessing justness. Hence, if, when it is said to be justness, it is not said of what character it is, but *what* it is, it follows that, when it is called just, it is not said of what character it is, but what it is.

Therefore, seeing that it is the same to say of the supreme Being, that it is just and that it is justness; and, when it is said that it is justness, it is nothing else than saying that it is just; it makes no difference whether it is said to be justness or to be just. Hence, when one is asked regarding the supreme Nature, what it is, the answer, *Just*, is not less fitting than the answer, *Justness*. Moreover, what we see to have been proved in the case of justness, the intellect is compelled to acknowledge as true of all attributes which are similarly predicated of this supreme Nature. Whatever such attribute is predicated of it, then, it is shown, not of what character, or how great, but *what* it is.

But it is obvious that whatever good thing the supreme Nature is, it is in the highest degree. It is, therefore, supreme Being, supreme Justness, supreme Wisdom, supreme Truth, supreme Goodness, supreme Greatness, supreme Beauty, supreme Immortality, supreme Incorruptibility, supreme Immutability, supreme Blessedness, supreme Eternity, supreme Power, supreme Unity; which is nothing else than supremely being, supremely living, etc.

CHAPTER XVII.

It is simple in such a way that all things that can be said of its essence are one and the same in it: and nothing can be said of its substance except in terms of *what it is*.

Is it to be inferred, then, that if the supreme Nature is so many goods, it will therefore be compounded of more goods than one? Or is it true, rather, that there are not more goods than one, but a single good

described by many names? For, everything which is composite requires for its subsistence the things of which it is compounded, and, indeed, owes to them the fact of its existence, because, whatever it is, it is through these things; and they are not what they are through it, and therefore it is not at all supreme. If, then, that Nature is compounded of more goods than one, all these facts that are true of every composite must be applicable to it. But this impious falsehood the whole cogency of the truth that was shown above refutes and overthrows, through a clear argument.

Since, then, that Nature is by no means composite, and yet is by all means those so many goods, necessarily all these are not more than one, but are one. Any one of them is, therefore, the same as all, whether taken all at once or separately. Therefore, just as whatever is attributed to the essence of the supreme Substance is one; so this substance is whatever it is essentially in one way, and by virtue of one consideration. For, when a man is said to be a material body, and rational, and human, these three things are not said in one way, or in virtue of one consideration. For, in accordance with one fact, he is a material body; and in accordance with another, rational; and no one of these, taken by itself, is the whole of what man is.

That supreme Being, however, is by no means anything in such a way that it is not this same thing, according to another way, or another consideration; because, whatever it is essentially in any way, this is all of what it is. Therefore, nothing that is truly said of the supreme Being is accepted in terms of quality or quantity, but only in terms of *what* it is. For, whatever it is in terms of either quality or quantity

would constitute still another element, in terms of what it is; hence, it would not be simple, but composite.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It is without beginning and without end.

FROM what time, then, has this so simple Nature which creates and animates all things existed, or until what time is it to exist? Or rather, let us ask neither from what time, nor to what time, it exists; but is it without beginning and without end? For, if it has a beginning, it has this either from or through itself, or from or through another, or from or through nothing.

But it is certain, according to truths already made plain, that in no wise does it derive existence from another, or from nothing; or exist through another, or through nothing. In no wise, therefore, has it had inception through or from another, or through or from nothing.

Moreover, it cannot have inception from or through itself, although it exists from and through itself. For it so exists from and through itself, that by no means is there one essence which exists from and through itself, and another through which, and from which, it exists. But, whatever begins to exist from or through something, is by no means identical with that from or through which it begins to exist. Therefore, the supreme Nature does not begin through or from, itself.

Seeing, then, that it has a beginning neither through nor from itself, and neither through nor from nothing, it assuredly has no beginning at all. But neither will it have an end. For, if it is to have end, it is not supremely immortal and supremely incorrupt-

ible. But we have proved that it is supremely immortal and supremely incorruptible. Therefore, it will not have an end.

Furthermore, if it is to have an end, it will perish either willingly or against its will. But certainly that is not a simple, unmixed good, at whose will the supreme good perishes. But this Being is itself the true and simple, unmixed good. Therefore, that very Being, which is certainly the supreme good, will not die of its own will. If, however, it is to perish against its will, it is not supremely powerful, or all-powerful. But cogent reasoning has asserted it to be powerful and all-powerful. Therefore, it will not die against its will. Hence, if neither with nor against its will the supreme Nature is to have an end, in no way will it have an end.

Again, if the supreme nature has an end or a beginning, it is not true eternity, which it has been irrefutably proved to be above.

Then, let him who can conceive of a time when this began to be true, or when it was not true, namely, that something was destined to be; or when this shall cease to be true, and shall not be true, namely, that something has existed. But, if neither of these suppositions is conceivable, and both these facts cannot exist without truth, it is impossible even to conceive that truth has either beginning or end. And then, if truth had a beginning, or shall have an end; before it began it was true that truth did not exist, and after it shall be ended it will be true that truth will not exist. Yet, anything that is *true* cannot exist without truth. Therefore, truth existed before truth existed, and truth will exist after truth shall be ended, which is a most contradictory conclusion. Whether, then,

truth is said to have, or understood not to have, beginning or end, it cannot be limited by any beginning or end. Hence, the same follows as regards the supreme Nature, since it is itself the supreme Truth.

CHAPTER XIX.

In what sense nothing existed before or will exist after this Being.

BUT here we are again confronted by the term *nothing*, and whatever our reasoning thus far, with the concordant attestation of truth and necessity, has concluded nothing to be. For, if the propositions duly set forth above have been confirmed by the fortification of logically necessary truth, not anything existed before the supreme Being, nor will anything exist after it. Hence, nothing existed before, and nothing will exist after, it. For, either something or nothing must have preceded it; and either something or nothing must be destined to follow it.

But, he who says that nothing existed before it appears to make this statement, "that there was before it a time when nothing existed, and that there will be after it a time when nothing will exist." Therefore, when nothing existed, that Being did not exist, and when nothing shall exist, that Being will not exist. How is it, then, that it does not take inception from nothing or how is it that it will not come to nothing?—if that Being did not yet exist, when nothing already existed; and the same Being shall no longer exist, when nothing shall still exist. Of what avail is so weighty a mass of arguments, if this *nothing* so easily demolishes their structure? For, if it is established that the supreme Being succeeds *nothing*,¹ which

¹*Nothing* is here treated as an entity, supposed actually to precede the supreme Being in existence. The fallacy involved is shown below.—*Tr.*

precedes it, and yields its place to *nothing*, which follows it, whatever has been posited as true above is necessarily unsettled by empty nothing.

But, rather ought this *nothing* to be resisted, lest so many structures of cogent reasoning be stormed by *nothing*; and the supreme good, which has been sought and found by the light of truth, be lost for *nothing*. Let it rather be declared, then, that nothing did not exist before the supreme Being, and that nothing will not exist after it, rather than that, when a place is given before or after it to nothing, that Being which through itself brought into existence what was nothing, should be reduced through nothing to nothing.

For this one assertion, namely, that nothing existed before the supreme Being, carries two meanings. For, one sense of this statement is that, before the supreme Being, there was a time when nothing was. But another understanding of the same statement is that, before the supreme Being, not anything existed. Just as, supposing I should say, "Nothing has taught me to fly," I could explain this assertion either in this way, that nothing, as an entity in itself, which signifies *not anything*, has taught me actually to fly—which would be false; or in this way, that not anything has taught me to fly, which would be true.

The former interpretation, therefore, which is followed by the inconsistency discussed above, is rejected by all reasoning as false. But there remains the other interpretation, which unites in perfect consistency with the foregoing arguments, and which, from the force of their whole correlation, must be true.

Hence, the statement that nothing existed before that Being must be received in the latter sense. Nor

should it be so explained, that it shall be understood that there was any time when that Being did not exist, and nothing did exist; but, so that it shall be understood that, before that Being, there was not anything. The same sort of double signification is found in the statement that nothing will exist after that Being.

If, then, this interpretation of the term *nothing*, that has been given, is carefully analysed, most truly neither something nor nothing preceded or will follow the supreme Being, and the conclusion is reached, that nothing existed before or will exist after it. Yet, the solidity of the truths already established is in no wise impaired by the emptiness of *nothing*.

CHAPTER XX.

It exists in every place and at every time.

BUT, although it has been concluded above that this creative Nature exists everywhere, and in all things, and through all; and from the fact that it neither began, nor will cease to be, it follows that it always has been, and is, and will be; yet, I perceive a certain secret murmur of contradiction which compels me to inquire more carefully where and when that Nature exists.

The supreme Being, then, exists either everywhere and always, or merely at some place and time, or nowhere and never: or, as I express it, either in every place and at every time, or finitely, in some place and at some time, or in no place and at no time.

But what can be more obviously contradictory, than that what exists most really and supremely exists nowhere and never? It is, therefore, false that it ex-

ists nowhere and never. Again, since there is no good, nor anything at all without it; if this Being itself exists nowhere or never, then nowhere or never is there any good, and nowhere and never is there anything at all. But there is no need to state that this is false. Hence, the former proposition is also false, that that Being exists nowhere and never.

It therefore exists finitely, at some time and place, or everywhere and always. But, if it exists finitely, at some place or time, there and then only, where and when it exists, can anything exist. Where and when it does not exist, moreover, there is no existence at all, because, without it, nothing exists. Whence it will follow, that there is some place and time where and when nothing at all exists. But seeing that this is false—for place and time themselves are existing things—the supreme Nature cannot exist finitely, at some place or time. But, if it is said that it of itself exists finitely, at some place and time, but that, through its power, it is wherever and whenever anything is, this is not true. For, since it is manifest that its power is nothing else than itself, by no means does its power exist without it.

Since, then, it does not exist finitely, at some place or time, it must exist everywhere and always, that is, in every place and at every time.

CHAPTER XXI.

It exists in no place or time.

BUT, if this is true, either it exists in every place and at every time, or else only a part of it so exists, the other part transcending every place and time.

But, if in part it exists, and in part does not exist,

in every place and at every time, it has parts; which is false. It does not, therefore, exist everywhere and always in part.

But how does it exist as a whole, everywhere and always? For, either it is to be understood that it exists as a whole at once, in all places or at all times, and by parts in individual places and times; or, that it exists as a whole, in individual places and times as well.

But, if it exists by parts in individual places or times, it is not exempt from composition and division of parts; which has been found to be in a high degree alien to the supreme Nature. Hence, it does not so exist, as a whole, in all places and at all times that it exists by parts in individual places and times.

We are confronted, then, by the former alternative, that is, how the supreme Nature can exist, as a whole, in every individual place and time. This is doubtless impossible, unless it either exists at once or at different times in individual places or times. But, since the law of place and the law of time, the investigation of which it has hitherto been possible to prosecute in a single discussion, because they advanced on exactly the same lines, here separate one from another and seem to avoid debate, as if by evasion in diverse directions, let each be investigated independently in discussion directed on itself alone.

First, then, let us see whether the supreme Nature can exist, as a whole, in individual places, either at once in all, or at different times, in different places. Then, let us make the same inquiry regarding the times at which it can exist.

If, then, it exists as a whole in each individual place, then, for each individual place there is an indi-

vidual whole. For, just as place is so distinguished from place that there are individual places, so that which exists as a whole, in one place, is so distinct from that which exists as a whole at the same time, in another place, that there are individual wholes. For, of what exists as a whole, in any place, there is no part that does not exist in that place. And that of which there is no part that does not exist in a given place, is no part of what exists at the same time outside this place.

What exists as a whole, then, in any place, is no part of what exists at the same time outside that place. But, of that of which no part exists outside any given place, no part exists, at the same time, in another place. How, then, can what exists as a whole, in any place, exist simultaneously, as a whole, in another place, if no part of it can at that time exist in another place?

Since, then, one whole cannot exist as a whole in different places at the same time, it follows that, for individual places, there are individual wholes, if anything is to exist as a whole in different individual places at once. Hence, if the supreme Nature exists as a whole, at one time, in every individual place, there are as many supreme Natures as there can be individual places; which it would be irrational to believe. Therefore, it does not exist, as a whole, at one time in individual places.

If, however, at different times it exists, as a whole, in individual places, then, when it is in one place, there is in the meantime no good and no existence in other places, since without it absolutely nothing exists. But the absurdity of this supposition is proved by the existence of places themselves, which are not

nothing, but something. Therefore, the supreme Nature does not exist, as a whole, in individual places at different times.

But, if neither at the same time nor at different times does it exist, as a whole, in individual places, it is evident that it does not at all exist, as a whole, in each individual place. We must now examine, then, whether this supreme Nature exists, as a whole, at individual times, either simultaneously or at distinct times for individual times.

But, how can anything exist, as a whole, simultaneously, at individual times, if these times are not themselves simultaneous? But, if this Being exists, as a whole, separately and at distinct times for individual times, just as a man exists as a whole yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow; it is properly said that it was and is and will be. Its age, then, which is no other than its eternity, does not exist, as a whole, simultaneously, but it is distributed in parts according to the parts of time.

But its eternity is nothing else than itself. The supreme Being, then, will be divided into parts, according to the divisions of time. For, if its age is prolonged through periods of time, it has with this time present, past, and future. But what else is its age than its duration of existence, than its eternity? Since, then, its eternity is nothing else than its essence, as considerations set forth above irrefutably prove; if its eternity has past, present, and future, its essence also has, in consequence, past, present, and future.

But what is past is not present or future; and what is present is not past or future; and what is future is not past or present. How, then, shall that

proposition be valid, which was proved with clear and logical cogency above, namely, that that supreme Nature is in no wise composite, but is supremely simple, supremely immutable?—how shall this be so, if that Nature is one thing, at one time, and another, at another, and has parts distributed according to times? Or rather, if these earlier propositions are true, how can these latter be possible? By no means, then, is past or future attributable to the creative Being, either its age or its eternity. For why has it not a present, if it truly *is*? But *was* means past, and *will be* future. Therefore that Being never was, nor will be. Hence, it does not exist at distinct times, just as it does not exist, as a whole, simultaneously in different individual times.

If, then, as our discussion has proved, it neither so exists, as a whole, in all places or times that it exists, as a whole, at one time in all, or by parts in individual places and times; nor so that it exists, as a whole, in individual times and places, it is manifest that it does not in any way exist, as a whole, in every time or place.

And, since, in like manner, it has been demonstrated that it neither so exists in every time or place, that a part exists in every, and a part transcends every, place and time, it is impossible that it exists everywhere and always.

For, in no way can it be conceived to exist everywhere and always, except either as a whole or in part. But if it does not at all exist everywhere and always, it will exist either finitely in some place or time, or in none. But it has already been proved, that it cannot exist finitely, in any place or time. In no place or time, that is, nowhere and never does it exist. For

